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“Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations : and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me.”—S. LUKE xxii. 28, 29.

What exactly is the nature of our Lord's promise in this place to His Apostles? According to the English Bible what He appoints to them is a kingdom like His own ; but it is possible, and seems preferable to adopt the punctuation of the sentence suggested by the Cambridge editors of the New Testament, according to which the kingdom is spoken of throughout as Christ's, and what is appointed to the Apostles is a place of special authority and fellowship in it. “Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations : and I appoint unto you, even as my Father appointed unto me a kingdom, to eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and ye shall sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” In any case the sense is not materially different, and the royal gift which Christ offers, appears in both cases as the reward of apostolic perseverance. “Ye are they which have *continued* with me in my temptations.”

It is a benediction which appeals with something of special force to us who are gathered here to day. Probably, when we were younger, whether at the University or as students here, we were inclined to suppose the chief difficulty of life to lie at the beginning. The temptations of youth are beyond a doubt strong ; it is a great thing to subdue the gusts of youthful passion, to trample under foot the first solicitations of evil, to catch, amidst the Babel of many voices in our ears, the steady clear notes of the Catholic Creed, and thus to

begin life well with thoroughness of moral purpose and simplicity of orthodox faith. This is indeed a great thing. A good beginning is a large part of the whole. But the Bible would teach us, and we have been coming to learn the lesson, that there is at least as much difficulty in endurance as in right enterprise, "The spiritual powers of wickedness in the heavenly places"* are all about our lives: there is the constant pressure of lower motives which we hoped had been overcome for good and all: there is the strain put on high ideals by the embittering experience of disappointment and failure; and (what is even more trying, because utter failure has something in it which inspires to heroism), there is the strain on life of average experience, half success and half failure, reducing the light of life to that dreary twilight, "neither day nor night," in which the most of our battle has to be fought. Over and above this we have to bear, what is at least as hard as our own failures and inconsistencies, the failures of others, whether some revered teacher or some valued friend or one of those whom God commits to our charge, of whom we had hoped the best. All this, and much more, in various degrees, comes upon us as we pass from youth to middle life; more and more as life is prolonged the cry of every human soul finds fit expression in those lines of Emily Brontë written in her stoic solitude:

"Yes, as my swift days near their goal
 'Tis all that I implore,
 In life and death a chainless soul
 With courage to endure."

We all then are growing to understand the meaning, the comfort, of our Lord's benediction on those who "continue with Him in His temptations;" and yet the words will have for us a still deeper significance, if we consider a little more

* Ephes. vi. 12.

closely the circumstances of our Lord's words, the meaning of "*His Temptations.*" For the particular kind of trial which the Apostles had endured was the trial of their faith and loyalty, through the veiling of Christ's Kingship under forms of weakness. Christ was a King, His Father appointed a Kingdom unto Him. "Thou sayest that I am a King."—so He bore witness of Himself before Pilate—"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." Christ was King; more than this, He came into the world to reveal, to manifest His royalty; yet how strangely veiled had been its manifestation to the eyes of men about Him! Though He was among men, visible to sight in physical fact, His royalty was apparent only to the sons of faith; the rest were offended in Him. Strikingly opposed to one another (we notice further) were the grounds of offence to different minds. To some it was the humility of His method which did not sufficiently strike the imagination. "Depart hence," said His brethren, (out of provincial Galilee into Judæa, the centre of Jewish life and movement), for no man doeth any thing in secret, and himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou doest these things shew thyself to the world. For neither did his brethren believe in him."* With others, the cause of rejection was the claim He made on faith: they wanted Him to demonstrate His Messiahship so that there could be no mistake about it; they wanted to get rid of the necessity for an exercise of faith at all. "The Jews came round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou hold us in suspense? If thou art the Christ, tell us plainly."†

With others—the Sadducees—the stumbling-block lay in the supernatural character of His message. They denied resurrection, angel, spirit; they were not indeed unbelievers; but with the scepticism of worldly men, responsible for a political

* St. John vii. 3-5.

† St. John x. 24.

situation, they wanted to keep the supernatural claim of religion at arm's length ; they resented its intrusion into the immediate foreground of practical affairs. But if for the Sadducees Christ was too supernatural, for others of the people He was too *natural*. They "sought after a sign," they wanted a wonder-worker, who would have restored the temporal glory to Israel ; they could not away with the meek and lowly in heart, who rendered unto Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's ; Who would not cry nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street ; Who was led as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so opened He not His mouth.

Thus manifold were the causes of offence ; He was rejected because His message did not strike the imagination, or because it did not satisfy the reason, so as to leave no room for doubt ; or because it was too supernatural, or because it was too natural. Thus on many grounds men fell away ; so we read how after Christ's great discourse on eating His Flesh and drinking His Blood, the Jews murmured, "How can this man give us His Flesh to eat?" and many of His disciples complained "This is a hard saying," and went back and walked no more with Him. It was under these circumstances that Jesus turned to the twelve, "Will ye also go away?" And Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that thou art the Holy one of God."*

This little band of Apostles watched class after class fall away ; watched inquiring curiosity and interest pass into aversion, hostility, hatred ; and through all this long continued trial, in spite of their own slowness of faith, and difficulty of spiritual apprehension, in spite of many rebukes from a Master whom they but little understood, though they greatly loved,

* St. John vi. 52-71.

they had remained loyal ; and at the Last Supper their reward came. Their Master contemplates them with a grateful satisfaction : “Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations, and inasmuch as My Father appointed a Kingdom unto Me, I appoint unto you to eat and drink at My table in My Kingdom, and ye shall sit on thrones.”

True, the approving words pass immediately into warning ; still there lay before the Apostles the most thorough sifting they had to experience ; Satan had desired to have them, that he might sift them as wheat. In large measure they would fail ; but their faith would revive, and on a basis of assurance which should not again be shaken, for they were, as the reward of their loyalty, to be witnesses of the Resurrection, witnesses that that Jesus, who was crucified in weakness, lived again and eternally by the power of God.

“Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations, and *I appoint unto you.*” My brethren, whatever appointment Christ has for us, it is on these same terms of endurance. For the temptations of Christ are renewed to each generation, in the temptations of the Church which is His Body, His Bride, His Kingdom. The Church does not indeed represent in its completeness the kingdom which the Father hath appointed unto Christ ; but, the Church, the Catholic Church, which has Christ for its King, and the Apostles and their successors for its Princes, sitting on thrones of judgement, is the representation *in and for this world* of the kingdom of Christ. The Church, then, the Spirit-bearing Body of Christ, is like Christ, truly visible and truly royal. Truly visible, for it is an organized and historical society, whose existence none can ignore ; truly royal with Christ's royalty, for she exists like Christ, to bear witness to the truth, to be the treasure-house of the truth and grace which came by Jesus Christ. Her ministry bears Christ's royal

commission ; her sacraments convey Christ's royal bounty. We believe, then, in the visible Church ; we believe that the visible Church was deliberately instituted by Christ, to represent His kingdom ; and yet we know that the Church's royalty is not visible, any more than her Master's was in such sense as to make the exercise of faith always easy or obvious, in such sense as to dispense with trials and offences, in such sense that any can execute Christ's appointment in her unless they can bear to continue with the bride of Christ in her temptations.

The Church in history is strangely disappointing to our natural tastes and expectations : in part, this is because she represents Christ's royalty, not as it exists to-day in the courts of Heaven, not as it will be manifested in the revelation of the glory of the sons of God, but as it was when Christ was in this world. "Non adhuc regnat hoc regnum," St. Augustine tells us. It is the great lesson of the Apocalypse, that the Church passes through all the stages of the life of Christ ; like Him witnessing, like Him an object of love and fear, like Him accepted and rejoiced in, like Him rejected and cast out, like Him seemingly defeated, defeated and slain, like Him through the grave and gate of death passing up to the throne of God. The promise to the Church is like the promise to Christ ; that the gates of death shall not prevail against her : not that the powers of death shall not for the time seem to have the advantage over her. Thus it is that loyalty to Christ's kingdom, loyalty to the cause of "truth and meekness and righteousness," strains human faith, because of its seeming weakness. But it is not only because the Church's fortunes correspond to the fortunes of Christ on earth ; there is also another reason why the Church strains our faith ; it is because of its sin. In one sense the Church's weakness would have been more conspicuous if she had been

more loyal to the inspiring Spirit ; for in that case she would have been less worldly and made herself less agreeable to the wealthy and powerful. But in another sense, the Church's sin, by marring the intention of Christ for her, has intensified the strain on our faith. If it has relaxed it in one way it has augmented it in another. *Catholic*, she has been content to leave a large part of the world in heathenism ; *holy*, she has been satisfied to live the ways of the world ; *apostolic*, she has let slip too sadly often the purity and loftiness of apostolic faith and practice ; *one*, she has let her vital unity shew itself but dimly, behind her jealousies and divisions.

In these things is the probation of faith ; in them has been its probation since apostolic days. We should have supposed, for instance, that a Church whose spiritual and vital unity Christ intended to be a witness in the world to His own oneness with the Father,* would have been free from divisions ; that it ought to have been so, there is no doubt ; we ought to have "kept the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." † But, Church communion is in part a moral thing ; it is a unity, as St. Augustine is always teaching, which can be maintained only by love ; it fails where love fails. As love has failed in Church history, lamentably, broadly, constantly ; as its place has been taken by bitterness, worldiness, ambition, so the bonds of external communion have been strained or broken. Such breaches are matters of degree : they had their anticipations in apostolic days, and S. Paul sees in them the probation of our faith. "There must needs," he wrote, "be heresies—that is, factious divisions—among you ; that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." ‡ These divisions, (he means)—I am of Paul, I of Apollos, I of Cephas, I of Christ,—are for the proving of your faith. Not that the wrong spirit was all on one side, so that

* S. John xvii. 21.

† Ephes. iv. 3.

‡ I Cor. xi. 19.

faith was proved by choosing which party to belong to, but that, in the very existence of such divisions, faith finds its opportunity for discrimination, its testing of all things, its holding fast that which is good ; in the imperfection of the present it deepens its hold on the eternal. S. Paul would say the same to us now. The divisions of the Church are distressing, disheartening enough ; but consider her history ! Can we recognise how full it has been of the ambition, the partizanship, the self-seeking, the obstinacy, which create and perpetuate divisions, without exclaiming, "There must needs have been divisions amongst us ; seeing what the Church has been, is it morally possible it could have been otherwise ?" There must needs have been divisions among us, and the end of such divisions is the trying of our faith, that they which are approved, who can stand testing, may be made manifest, manifest in love, in freedom from bitterness, from party-spirit ; manifest also in sound judgment, and discernment, and growth in spiritual knowledge.

Or once again, it is very distressing that we in the Church of England should have so much of self-vindication to do. We have to maintain our ground, to assert our apostolic character and Catholic claim ; surely (we may feel) this is not natural : "methinks we do protest too much : " the true mother does not have to vindicate her claims over her sons, she does not have to argue and explain and justify, she is recognised instinctively. So, surely, should the motherhood of the Church (which is only another aspect of her royalty) be self-evident ; it should not be so largely disallowed by the rest of the Church.

Certainly we should suppose so. Only such suppositions are rudely checked by what we read in the New Testament. What is the Epistle to the Galatians, what are large parts of the Epistles to the Corinthians but pieces of energetic pleading, in which we see an Apostle strenuously, vigorously,

persistently, maintaining his own claim to be an apostle, and that towards his own sons in the faith ; maintaining a claim, denied apparently on all sides, repudiated by those who were taken to represent those 'pillar apostles' whose claim on the other hand S. Paul himself acknowledged? Earnestly, strenuously and vigorously he strives to vindicate himself. By the urgency of the argument we can measure its necessity ; nay more, we can see the apparent justification of those who rejected him. He was, in fact, irregularly elected, his apostolic birth was, as he himself says, an abortion.* Thus the case against him puts fire into his counter-plea. We know he was in the right ; he was an apostle indeed, in reality of appointment by Christ Himself, in power, in the fruits of his labours ; but just because this is so, it comforts us that he should have to protest so much, to plead so often. It is a comfort to us that this strong vindication of an apostolic claim within the Church, should occupy so large a place among the books of the New Testament. And many failed under the strain of loyalty to St. Paul ; many of his own spiritual children ; at times he felt himself almost deserted ; verily to them only could he hand on the labours of the divine kingdom who had courage to continue with him in his temptations.

It is our comfort, then, brethren, that the trials we have to bear, the temptations of Christ and of His Church amidst which we are called upon to persevere, are of the sort which Scripture (as we continually meditate on it) leads us to anticipate. This is our comfort ; and it is so, I think, as we are forced from time to time to contrast our situation with that which we find existing in the Church of Rome. For undoubtedly, the Roman conception of authority, the isolation and emphasis which among the Roman Catholics is given to the authority of the Church, does get rid of a good deal of the strain which we ourselves feel.

* 1 Cor. xv. 8.

The Roman Church may be said to isolate and so emphasize the idea of the Church and her authority in three ways.

First, by separating the Church on earth, from that part of the Church which lies within the Veil, in such sense as to make the Church on earth a complete thing in itself; compact and rounded off with not only a visible hierarchy, but a visible hierarchy graduating up to a visible earthly head.

Secondly, the Romanist having thus given compactness and completeness to the Church on earth, proceeds to emphasize her present authority by isolating it from the restraints formerly put upon it by the recognition of Scripture as the final court of appeal in matters of Faith, and the parallel recognition of the past tradition of the Church as limiting her present teaching authority. These restraints the modern Roman view has set aside, partly by the position dating at any rate from the Council of Trent, that the tradition of the Church is a source of doctrine parallel to Scripture and independent of it; partly by the more modern but now formulated position that the present voice of the Church is in itself the all-sufficient guarantee of what Church teaching has always been in the past.¹

¹ The best exponent of the modern Roman conception of the authority of the Church is Franzelin *de Divina Traditione et Scriptura*, ed. tert. Rome, 1882: see *Thesis ix. Coroll i.*, p. 87: "sufficit demonstrasse aliquo tempore obtinentem consensum fidei in successione apostolica quo vindicetur revelatio divina et apostolica traditio cujus vis capitis doctrinae." (The italics are mine). Thus the 'quod semper' ceases to be an independent part of the rule by which the faith is tested. So Franzelin rejects with scorn the Vincentian canon, as Vincent uses it, i.e. as an exclusive canon, see *Thesis xii. Schol i. Princip. ii. Coroll. 4.*, p. 121. Quamvis certissime revelata censerī debeant ea omnia quae semper ubique ab omnibus credita sunt fide divina explicita, absurdum tamen et toti fidei economiæ contrarium, est dicere, ea sola contineri in deposito revelationis." *Thesis xxiv.*, p. 221. "Canon [Vincentianus] ergo verus est sensu affirmante, non tamen potest admitti sensu negante et excludente." This is not to interpret Vincent, but to reject him. To him the 'quod semper' is an additional test besides the *quod ubique*, and the test as a whole is meant to be exclusive, see *Commonitorium*, cc. 3, 9, 20, 27-29.

Thirdly, the Romanist emphasizes the idea of authority, by exempting it from the criticism and verification of the faithful. Faith, under her manipulation becomes an act of blind and passive submission, the acceptance once and for all of an external voice. To test the teaching of this voice by a process of verification in Scripture or past history is declared to be "rationalistic"—"a treason and a heresy;"² the teaching of the Church is simply to be accepted and used. Thus it is isolated from all those forces which the reaction upon it of individual judgments and characters was intended to exert.

The Roman Church in this way isolates and emphasizes the idea of the Church and her authority. And no doubt such manipulation does relieve human life of a great deal of strain. Faith does become a simpler thing, to those natures at least to whom such an act is possible at all, if it only means blind and unquestioning acceptance, just as, by a parallel process, it becomes a simpler thing in the hands of those, who, rejecting the authority of the Church altogether, make faith the simple individual consciousness of being saved. But neither of these views of faith, for all their apparent simplicity, represent Scripture. Scripture certainly leads us to expect an authoritative tradition which is to mould our judgment and control our individual aberrations; it leads us to claim gifts of grace

² Manning, *Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost*, Third Edition, 1877, pp. 238-240: "the appeal to antiquity is both a treason and a heresy. It is a treason because it rejects the Divine voice of the Church, and a heresy because it denies that voice to be Divine," . . . "I may say in strict truth that the Church has no antiquity. It rests upon its own supernatural and perpetual consciousness." . . . "The only divine evidence to us of what was primitive is the witness and voice of the Church at this time." Cf. also pp. 9, 29, and chapter iii. in Fr. Richardson's *What are the Catholic claims?* He states the Roman view clearly, though he does not state ours in a way we could accept. The *proximate* rule of faith must always be to every individual the current teaching of the Church, but this should be really though reverently verified by the learned at the tribunal of history, and by all the faithful in the Holy Scripture. It is the test of the soundness of Church teaching that it should admit of this verification.

in covenanted sacraments administered by authorised stewards of the Divine bounty; in a word, it leads us to expect a Church, which is to be not only the household of grace, but also the pillar and ground of truth. But it never justifies us in expecting that Church-membership is to dispense us from the trouble of forming our own judgment, and feeling our own way, any more than it dispenses us from the obligation of appropriating by an active personal faith the sacramental gifts. Scripture will not allow us to think of an absolute authority: "though we," says Paul the Apostle, "or an angel from heaven, preach unto you any other Gospel than that we did preach unto you—than that which ye received—let him be anathema."* It will not allow us to think that the teaching of the Church is to be a substitute for our own judgment; nay, "the spiritual man judgeth all things, and himself is judged of none."† It will not let us off the obligation of personal judgment; "test all things," says S. Paul, "and hold fast that which is good."‡ "Try the spirits," says S. John, "whether they be of God." "There shall arise," our Lord had warned, "false Christs and false prophets, who shall do great signs and wonders, so as to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect." In view of such dangers S. John appeals to Christians as men who have pre-eminently the power of judging; "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." "Ye need not that any one teach you."§

The teaching of the Church, in fact, is meant to be our education, our moulding, our strength, our stay, our freedom. But it is not meant to be an authority so cogent, so peremptory, as to exempt us from the effort and the responsibility of judgment, and the strain of this world's confusions. "The glory of God," says Irenaeus "is the living man: the life of

* 1 Gal. i. 8, 9.

† 1 Cor. ii. 15.

‡ 1 Thess. v. 21.

§ 1 S. John ii. 20-27, iv. 1-6.

man is the vision of God." The glory of God, that in which God finds His satisfaction, is man with all his faculties alive, and quick for effort and struggle and growth, as long as he is in this world: the true life of man is the vision of God; it is the goal of his being to behold God clear and unveiled, but he attains that goal by struggle and endurance of darkness here. Faith endures as seeing Him who is invisible.*

There are two practical reflections with which it seems natural to conclude: and the first is this. Not only do we thankfully recognise that the strain which lies upon us in the Church of England is nothing else than the strain which Scripture leads us to anticipate; but we recognize, too, that it is the endurance of this, and of this only, which can generate that ripeness and richness of character which enables us to commend the faith to every man's conscience. It is only because the strain is great, and at times felt to be indeed great, that it does purify us like fire, and fit us for God *and for man*. I can never forget how the Bishop who presided till lately in the See of Oxford, and whose name can never be mentioned in this place without gratitude and reverence, enjoined upon some of us who were being ordained priests, to remember that S. Paul's admonition to Timothy, "Let no man despise thee," did not mean that we were to go about asserting ourselves, or claiming our rights, but did mean that we were to be the sort of people men could not despise. It was a characteristic admonition from one who pre-eminently fulfilled it; we clergy must be the sort of people who cannot be despised. It is only by being this, that we can commend the faith to every man's conscience in the sight of God. For after all it is *character* which commends doctrine; we shall not be tempted to despise ritual in its place, because we recognise how very little way it reaches in the work of Christ's

* Heb. xi. 27.

kingdom ; still less shall we be tempted to depreciate an exact and full knowledge of doctrine, because we perceive that dogma is to a great many, and to a great many of the best men in all classes, at the present moment as an unknown tongue. But what gives meaning to the reasonable ritual of worship, what opens men's hearts to appreciate doctrine, what, in a word, enables us to commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God, is the witness of *character*. We mean by this, not attractiveness of manners, or buoyancy of spirits, or the sort of sympathy which is a special gift of special natures, but that mature growth of strength, endurance, patience, self-suppression, forbearance, judgment, considerateness, self-sacrifice ; that mature growth of ripe Christian manhood which is brought into being by no other discipline than that—that searching, testing probation which Scripture bids us to expect, which the circumstances of our own day certainly provide. It must needs be that these evils should abound amongst us, that they which are proof should be made manifest ; that we may be disciplined to become the sort of clergy that men cannot despise, “in power and love and discipline.”

Once more, and in the last place, the more we feel the strain which life brings with it the more grateful do we become for what Cuddesdon gave us, the easier it becomes to us to justify the existence of such places of clerical training as we find here. Those who know little about such places may speak of them as tending to externalism, or as promoting sentimentalism or unreality. We who know Cuddesdon from within know the truth. Through all changes in the governing staff Cuddesdon has been pre-eminently, as known from within, the trainer of men in reality, in character ; the material presented has been of course very various, with all the varieties of human nature, but upon all alike the

influences of this place have gone straight home to the roots of moral character and personal discipline.

But there is one thing said against Cuddesdon which is in great measure true, and so far as it is true, is her justification. 'A Theological College,' it is said, 'is too unlike the world of common experience to be wholesome: it has the atmosphere of a moral hothouse.' Now, those of us who have had most reason to feel Cuddesdon unlike the world, would be the first to protest that the life here was that of a *home*, not of a hothouse. But home is unlike the world, and it is therefore quite truly said that Cuddesdon is unlike the world: we do not easily find elsewhere so real an expression of the *homelikeness* of the Church; we do not find elsewhere a household of love so enfolding, of discipline so strengthening. It is just because the ecclesiastical world presents features so unlike these, that we need the preparation of a Cuddesdon to give us strength against the world. Here we learnt the meaning and the obligations of *spiritual fellowship* in a way that we never can forget; it did seem to us, as we thought of the 'rampart of our fellows' which Cuddesdon reared about us, as if in truth it were

"Impossible to fail, so watched.

If danger daunted me or ease seduced,

How calmly those sad eyes would gaze reproach."

It is because the life of the Church at large does so much to encourage in us what is bad,—externalism, jealousy, rivalry, ambition after power or place, love of notoriety—that we need before we enter upon it to have felt as closely as we can feel it on earth, the obligation of the Communion of Saints, the fellowship of the Church on earth.

Again, it is because the world is so entangled, so perplexing, that we need the security of a clear vision, a strongly impressed ideal of truth, before we start upon its battles. It is right that we should start with such a vision if we are to fight

our way cheerfully through the fogs of life. And such a vision we Cuddesdon men have had. There was a 'pattern shown to us' on this little hill, and we gazed upon it till we drank it in. Hereafter our road has lain through dusty and wearisome plains, and up dull hills where there was no view but only the exertion of climbing, and through dark valleys where there was little light; but there has been throughout a vision behind us, and it did something to nerve us—

“As the third heaven once nerved a Saint
For fourteen trial years.”

True the vision faded; in part it was only a vision: we thought, perhaps, that we were stronger or better than we have found we were; the experience has been sad; we are much discouraged because of the way. But we must not falter; the best thing God has shown us is meant for realization, only not in our way or according to our dreams. “I will not leave thee till I have done all that I have spoken to thee of.”* The true vision—the vision of which Cuddesdon was only a foretaste—is still ahead of us, far on in front: ‘We shall see it, but not now: we shall behold it but not nigh, for the vision is yet for an appointed day, but though it tarry, we will wait for it; because it will surely come and will not tarry’. In our endurance,—if possible cheerful, bright endurance; if not, at least in silent, uncomplaining endurance to the end,—we will, please God, win both our own souls and the souls of others. We will, to quote St. Bernard’s fine expression, ‘be taken down from our crosses, like our Lord, by other hands, not by our own.’ “Deponamur crucibus nostris aliorum manibus, non nostris.” For this is the word of approval we long for at last, the one benediction we need when we see Him as He is — “Ye are they which have continued with Me in My Temptations.”

* Genesis xxviii. 15.

The Clergy and the Creeds

A SERMON PREACHED BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
ON TRINITY SUNDAY, 1887

WITH AN APPENDIX ON A RECENT WORK, ENTITLED "THE KERNEL
AND THE HUSK," AND AN ARTICLE BY THE HON. AND REV.
W. H. FREMANTLE, CANON OF CANTERBURY, CALLED
"THEOLOGY UNDER ITS CHANGED CONDITIONS"

BY

CHARLES GORE, M.A.

PRINCIPAL OF THE FUSEY HOUSE, FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD, AND EXAMINING
CHAPLAIN TO THE BISHOP OF LINCOLN

RIVINGTONS

WATERLOO PLACE, LONDON

MDCCCLXXXVII

THE following Sermon was preached on the Ramsden Foundation, on behalf of "the extension of the Church through the colonies and dependencies of the British Empire." It makes an appeal to those who care for Church extension, to look well to it that we guard the Faith which we are charged to propagate.

"A time to keep silence, and a time to speak."—ECCLES. iii. 7.

I.

THE Mission Field is in a certain sense the Confessional of Churches. They confess there their inward and spiritual diseases without their choice, or even against their will. The weaknesses which at home are at least restrained by an established social order, more or less imbued with Christian ideas, have free scope for developing all their dangerous symptoms when "that which restraineth" is no more at hand. The anomalies which custom alone has rendered tolerable, come out in their true light where customs have still to be created. The local or national narrownesses which have impaired the Catholic character and applicability of the Church's Message, are only unmasked when its foreign application becomes the primary object. In this way the English Church has been compelled by her Mission-work to make a great number of damaging confessions. It is not only or chiefly that for a long period her ignoring of missionary obligation revealed her forgetfulness of the first characteristic of Catholic Christianity. More than this—since she began to awake to her in-

perative obligations, she has betrayed herself in the fulfilment of them.

For example: we may preach the doctrine of justification by faith at home, and even if we preach it amiss, at least we preach it where there is a background of moral law accepted and recognized, and if the great Pauline principle is not put into its true and logical relation to the older and immutable principles of "righteousness and judgment to come," at least it is in an illogical way held in context by them. But in India the doctrine was preached to peoples who mostly lacked the Belief in a Divine Judge,¹ and all the error in the preaching had its unrestrained result. "Our people," a well-educated Bengali clergyman once said to me, with a *naïveté* which would have been impossible in an Englishman, "Our people have been so long taught that they are justified by faith that *they do not believe in righteousness.*" Or, again, we may pride ourselves on the thoroughly national character of our Christianity at home; but it suggests to a man's mind something quite different from pride when he finds it abroad exhibiting itself in a marked unwillingness to welcome Orientals into the circle of Christian brotherhood, or (among those who quite avoid this worst fault) in the endeavour to

¹ See a very interesting article written from a non-Christian point of view by a careful observer of religious tendencies in India, entitled "Progress in India," by Vamadeva Shastin (*Fortnightly Review*, Dec., 1885, pp. 798—800).

acclimatize Anglican chants, Gothic architecture, and Teutonic Puritanism amongst races with a music and an architecture and a rich symbolism of their own, only waiting the fertilization which the Spirit of Christ could infuse into it.²

A great number of illustrations would suggest themselves to the mind of any one at all acquainted with the Mission Field. This unmasking of the weak points of our Church life is at least one of the debts of gratitude—one among very many—which we owe to the self-sacrifice of missionaries.

But it is useless confessing what we do not seek to amend, and it seems to me that we at home are open to the charge of taking very little to heart the lessons about our internal condition which missionary work ought to have taught English Churchmen. It is of course more agreeable to disencumber ourselves of such unpleasant reflections, by the consideration that other Churches reveal other faults not less disastrous—that for example the Roman Catholic Church has had its capacity for accommodation put in an unpleasant light by the history of Jesuit Missions in India. For such a sadly common method of escape from the duty of repentance St. Paul would have had a severe rebuke. Would he not have reminded us, like the Corinthians, that the

² Some of the best missionaries in India, whether of the two great Societies, of the Oxford and Cambridge Missions at Calcutta and Delhi, or of the Society of St. John the Evangelist, are now (it must be said) thoroughly alive to the necessity of being Catholic, and not merely English, Churchmen.

standard of comparison by which the Christian, individual or society, must test attainment, is not at all the perceived or supposed failures of others? These men, he would have said,³ "measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise."

Let me come to my point then.

There is no respect in which the English Church has shown up so badly abroad as in the matter of Doctrinal Unity. It is no more than the truth to say that we have already lamentably hindered the spread of the Christian Faith among many races by the bewildering diversities of teaching and method which we have presented to them, and (taking a broad view of the prospects of the English Church) that we must in the future fall disastrously short of what God expects of us and gives us the opportunity of doing, unless we amend in this respect.

Nor has anybody a right to sneer at the idea of the Anglican Church recovering her unity. Looking at the matter from inside and in view of the wonderful revival of spiritual life and truth which has been going on within her, we are not at all without encouragement. It requires no blind and irrational optimism to maintain that the Church is working back from within towards, I do not say a rigid and narrow uniformity, but an intelligible, and living, and coherent unity. But to give us pause in these good hopes

³ 2 Cor. x. 20.

there has appeared on the Church's horizon—rather there has manifested itself in the very centre of our life—a danger which I may call new—a danger which threatens our very foundations, by blurring all the clear issues of truth which make doctrinal unity intelligible and possible. A claim (which in its present shape is new) is making itself heard. It was put forward, though with hesitation and large reservations, by one who seeks to disentangle what he thinks is “the kernel” of spiritual truth from “the husk” of traditional Christianity:⁴ it has been put forward more recently and more broadly as an accompaniment of what is to be “the New Reformation.”⁵ The claim is this:—That men should exercise the Church's sacred ministry, and solemnly and constantly, as the condition of its exercise, profess her creeds, while all the time the truths which those creeds express with so much emphasis, are openly (in their only intelligible sense) denied or regarded as open questions.

The language of the creeds is stoutly positive, and it may well be, as indeed seems to be the case, that such a claim, which shocks our natural instinct, will not at all commend itself to the consciences of those unhappily alienated from the faith, any more than “those within,” and will pass away as an eccentricity. “Even like as a dream when

⁴ On “The Kernel and the Husk,” see Appendix, p. 35.

⁵ On Canon Fremantle's article, “Theology under its Changed Conditions,” see Appendix, p. 35.

one awaketh so shalt thou make their image to vanish out of the city." But the avowed object is to destroy the distinctive, separate character of the Christian Creed. "The Church of the Future" is to "merge itself more and more in general society, being ready, in the true spirit of its Lord, to lose itself that it may save mankind."⁶ In the true spirit of its Lord! of Him who would not "commit Himself to any man because He knew what was in man;" who let His Message seem utterly to fail just because He would not bring it down to the level of what "general society" could appreciate. But that object, however strange to the Christian sense, is the avowed one. The hope is that without altering the distinctive language of our creeds and prayers, custom may familiarize us with its use in an unnatural sense. The aim is to get the claim publicly expressed and tacitly recognized. Our difficulty, says the first writer referred to, "would be diminished, if not altogether removed, by publicity."⁷ "It is quite possible," writes the second, "that what is a puzzle to one generation will not be so to the next." This is undoubtedly true. People will get accustomed to the use of the highest language in a quite unreal sense unless we purge ourselves of it. We need to meet the challenge with a protest so clear, so broad, so firm, that the verdict of the Church's conscience shall be quite unmis-

⁶ Canon Fremantle, p. 457.

⁷ "The Kernel and the Husk," p. 344.

takable. Without that protest we become accomplices. It is not only the educated classes who will become suspicious whether the clergy believe what they assert. It is not too much to say that if this new claim were acquiesced in, if this new tendency were to spread, it would threaten, more gravely than anything before it, the cohesion of the Church at home and her Missionary prospects abroad.

II.

TRINITY SUNDAY is the Festival of Revelation. It brings before us the very familiar truth that Christianity is a Revelation of the Being and Character of God. It is a Revelation, first of all, of quite intelligible import.

Secondly, it is either a supernatural Revelation or nothing substantial at all.

1. It is a Revelation of quite intelligible import. It affects, of course, the nature and state of man⁸;

⁸ That is, it is a Revelation of his immortality, and his immortality under certain conditions of life: it is also a Revelation of his fallen state. See Robert Browning, "Gold Hair, A Legend of Pornic."

"The candid incline to surmise of late
That the Christian faith may be false, I find.

I still, to suppose it true, for my part,
See reasons and reasons; this to begin:
'Tis the faith that launched point blank her dart
At the head of a lie—taught Original Sin,
The corruption of man's heart."

It is of great importance to get people to see that this doctrine

but let that pass : it is much before that a Revelation of the Being and Character of God. God (this festival reminds us), the one and only self-subsistent Being, exists eternally in three Persons. The Church apologizes for the word Person.⁹ She

does not imply that man was created in full development and has since gone backwards (see Canon Fremantle's quotation from Rev. C. Fletcher, p. 450) ; so that Bacon and Shakespeare would be "the rags of Adam." Let any one who thinks that this is the Christian doctrine, read St. Athanasius' "C. Gentes," i.—viii. Christianity holds that man, when he was made in God's image, was put upon right lines of development—in a right relation to God—and by his own wilfulness tainted his development by an element of moral disorder and consequent decay. He still developed, but the development has been a marred one, tainted with this moral disorder and decay, and needing not only consummation, but also recovery. If any one asks, what binds an English clergyman to hold the doctrine of original sin, I point to the Article IX. and Scripture. I may add that there is no alternative to it except the recognition that sin is according to God's will, a part of "Nature," or the abandonment of the Doctrine of Creation, for some form of Manichæism. (See Mozley, "Lectures," &c. ix. x.) But where is there any Church formula which has stereotyped the doctrine in what I may call its Miltonic form? The Bible is, in a unique sense, *the book of development*. It looks forward not backward. I should like on this subject to refer to Mr. Holland's "Solidarity of Salvation," in his new volume, "Creed and Character." It is important also to notice that the early Christian teachers hold that Death was, from the first, *natural to man's physical organism* (see Athanasius, "De Incarnatione," iv.). His deliverance from it would have been supernatural. It belonged to his physical nature. See Cotterill, "Does Science aid Faith?" cap. 10.

⁹ This guarding of the sense of the term "Person" is a commonplace of Theology. But popular language and art no doubt often lay us open to the scoffs of Mr. Matthew Arnold.

explains that it does not mean separate individuals. But man "has no celestial language," and she must take the best word at her disposal. God exists, and His Existence as Living, Loving, Willing, Conscious Spirit, involves in Himself Relations and Distinctions which come out into Revelation in the Person of Jesus Christ, who manifested God under the threefold name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. And this Revelation of the Being of God is made, if I may so speak, by the way. It would appear to be made inevitably, in the process and for the sake of revealing His Character. Christianity is the Revelation that God is Love. Just for a moment let me emphasize how distinctly this is a Revelation—that is, a further unveiling of the Character of God than any we can derive from "Nature."¹ There is, the men of science tell us, one Force in Nature: our mind

¹ As to the use of the word "Nature" with reference to the supernatural and to the miraculous, I can refer to nothing better than St. Augustine's words, "C. Faust." book xxvi. cap. 3: "We may, without incongruity, say that God does in a manner contrary to Nature what He does contrary to Nature *as we know it*. For what we mean by 'Nature' *is this well-known and customary order*, and it is when God does anything contrary to this that His actions are called miracles or wonders. But as for that supreme law of Nature, which is beyond the perception of men, either because they are impious or because they are still weak in knowledge—against this God no more acts than He acts against Himself. And God's spiritual and rational creatures, amongst whom are men, the more they become participators in that immutable law and light, the more clearly they can see what can happen and what cannot; and the further off, on the other hand, they are (from that Divine law and light), so much

may compel us to recognize that this Force is no blind Force, but conscious Intelligence working with Design. The witness of Conscience, as a fact however evolved, may drive us to acknowledge in this Universal and Intelligent Being, a Moral Will. But all this, even if it be granted, does not amount to the Revelation of Love.

“Conjecture of the worker by the work :
 Is there strength there ? Enough : intelligence ?
 Ample : but goodness in a like degree ?
 Not to the human eye in the present state,
 An Isoscele deficient in the base.
 What lacks there of Perfection fit for God
 But just the instance which this tale supplies
 Of love without a limit ? So is strength,
 So is intelligence ; let love be so,
 Unlimited in its self-sacrifice,
 Then is the tale true as God shows complete.
 Beyond the tale, I reach into the dark,
 Feel what I cannot see, and still faith stands.”²

Yes : granted Intelligence and Moral Will in the Being whom Nature partly reveals and still more conceals, still we should be without (I do not say, some intimations, but without) *the Revelation of His Love*. But could we, in the face of so much to make against it, say our confident Credo in the God of Natural Religion, apart from the God of Grace ? At least the act of Faith which makes the more they are astonished at what they are not accustomed to, in proportion as they are blind to what is coming.”

Again, “Grace is not the negation of nature, but it is rather the restoration of nature.” See in a similar sense, Bishop Butler, “Analogy,” book i. cap. 1 (at the end).

² Browning, “The Ring and the Book,” vol. iv. p. 60.

us believe in an intelligent Creator and Moral Governor of the world, requires no increase to make us believe in Christ. And those who regard the Christian Faith as unreasonable will not mostly grant us more than a universal *Force*. Now the Christian believes that God is the universal Force. "Deus," the Church prays, "rerum tenax vigor!"³ But this is only the starting-point of his Creed. Its essence is that God is Love. Forgive my emphasizing so luminous a matter as that this Revelation of the Character of God has a quite distinctive meaning and a quite priceless importance. That God is Love—that all that seems so blind, so cruel, so remorseless, so inexorable in the system of Nature is controlled by the Will of One who, behind all and in all, is Perfect Love, and calls us one and all into fellowship and co-operation with Himself—this is a truth which, once believed, turns all misery into joy, and failure for God into triumph and hope. It is no substitute for it to recognize (as has been suggested recently, for "the theologians of the new epoch") that we can "speak of God as just and loving, since the Supreme Power *ex hypothesi* includes mankind, the leading portion of the world, with all its noblest ideals."⁴ By the love of God I mean something much more all-embracing, more profound than the love of man

³ The Hymn for the Ninth Hour. The idea finds full expression in the Doctrine of the Logos as the Fathers teach it.

⁴ Canon Fremantle's article (see Appendix), p. 454.

who is made in God's image. It is just when the best human love fails or is powerless that the need of Divine Love comes in. "When my father and my mother forsake me, the Lord taketh me up." The belief then that God is Love is most distinctive. It finds no reasonable substitute, though it does find a witness, in the recognition that there is love in humanity. And the conception of an eternal and inscrutable energy in all things, is no more an equivalent for it than the presence of a mysterious stranger makes up to a child for the absence of his mother.

2. Christianity is a supernatural Revelation or nothing substantial at all. What I mean is this:—There are a great number of discoveries revealed in the order of Nature by man to man which are quite independent of their inventors. Once made they become the property of the race, and we are not at all affected by any demonstration that their supposed authors are little but myths. It is not so with the substance of the Christian Revelation. That God is Triune, is indeed a truth which corresponds to the requirement of a Revelation made by the last representative of spiritual philosophy in Germany. "If reason," says Hermann Lotze, "is not of itself capable of finding the highest truth, but on the contrary stands in need of a Revelation which is either contained in some Divine act of historic occurrence, or is continually repeated in men's hearts, still reason must be able to un-

derstand the revealed truth, at least so far as to recognize in it the satisfying and convincing conclusion of those upward-soaring trains of thought which reason itself began, led by its own needs, but was not able to bring to an end.”⁵

To this claim the Christian Revelation corresponds. It is rationally credible.⁶

⁵ “Microcosmus,” vol. ii. p. 660 (Eng. trans.).

⁶ This might be put in different ways:—

(1) If we trace out the idea that all life involves self-expression or self-realization, we are led up to the truth of the Logos. The perfect life must have its perfect self-expression. If the Eternal and Absolute Being is Will and Reason and Love, this postulates relationship in the Eternal Being—the eternal relationship of Subject and Object. So only is God complete in Himself. *Immensus Pater in Filio Mensuratus: Mensura Patris Filius* (Irenæus).

(2) The truth that the highest life we know is the most differentiated, points in the same direction. Man’s spiritual being is in the image of God, and Plato, trying to express his spiritual nature is driven to a Trinitarian metaphor. “Republic,” ix. 588. D., “*σύναπτε αὐτὰ εἰς ἓν τρία ὄντα.*”

(3) We may recognize how little difficulty we feel in accepting what is part of experience, however little we are able to express it (e.g. the relation of soul and body: or of will and feeling and reason in ourselves, so often contradictory, yet so completely one). The Doctrine of the Trinity does become an element of experience, granted Christ’s language in general to be historical and trustworthy. I suppose it would be true to say that philosophy finds more difficulty about the “Personality” of God than about the Trinity. “The doctrine of the Trinity thus regarded is rather a concession to our reasonable and intellectual nature, than a stumbling-block to it.” (Mozley’s “Lectures,” *Mysterious Truths*, p. 112). Coleridge and Maurice are good instances of converts from Unitarianism on rational grounds.

But its whole force and security depend on a "Divine act of historic occurrence," on the historical character of Jesus Christ. I believe that God is Three in One, in the last resort simply because Christ's whole language postulates a certain complex relationship on His part to the Father and the Holy Ghost, and impressed itself in this sense upon His Apostles. His language is only intelligible on the postulate of a Trinity. We necessarily believe in the Threefold God in believing Christ to be the Only-begotten Son of God. Christ did not proclaim the Trinity as an abstract dogma. He simply brought It into notice in speaking about Himself and the Father, and the Paraclete. In the knowing Him we come to know the relationships in God, in the same sort of way as in coming to know anything, we come to know its relationships. But then it follows that our only real ground for believing in the Trinity is because Christ is believed to be what He claimed to be, One who came from behind the veil which shrouds the "unknown God," and revealed His Being. Just in the same way and for the same cause, only if Jesus Christ reveals God, do we know that God is Love. There are no arguments in the Gospel that prove that God is Love. There is no explanation of all the facts that, taken in and by themselves, might make against Divine Love. The Revelation of it is a Revelation in fact. If it be true that Christ came from out the Bosom of the Father, and

that "he that hath seen Him, hath seen the Father," then, whatever we may doubt, we cannot doubt that God is Love. *Christ* is, beyond all question, self-sacrificing Love. But He only reveals that *God* is Love if His Character is the Character of God: otherwise He proves no more than any other of the myriad lovers of their race.

I believe, then, that God is Love, as I could not have believed it on the authority of any number of bright angels who might have worked miracles to assure me of it, because *Christ* claimed to be the Son of God, the Revealer of God, who came forth from His innermost Being to make plain His Character in the intelligible form of human self-sacrifice: who argued not at all, but did what is so much more convincing than all argument—took all that makes against Divine Love, all the unmerited pain and failure and rejection which make up

"The weary and the heavy weight
Of all this unintelligible world"—

took it and clothed Himself in it—made it the Instrument of Divine self-sacrifice, the Instrument of Redemption, and then out of uttermost failure manifested the Truth of His claim to be the very Life, by His Resurrection from the Dead.

Yes. If there be a Common Lordship in the moral and physical world; if the physical world really and fundamentally serves the purposes of

Divine Love—then it must recognize its Lord manifest in the flesh. He must manifest His supremacy over Death.⁷ “It was not possible that He should be holden of it.” “He was declared to be Son of God in power by the Resurrection from the Dead.” The whole Christian Creed is a Revelation which depends upon Christ’s Person being recognized as Divine, and His claim is staked upon the reality of His Resurrection.

This, then, is the Christian Creed, as the Nicene symbol states it. It is a belief by implication in the Blessed Trinity. It is that because it is primarily a belief in Christ’s Person. It lays all stress on His being Very God—incarnate under supernatural conditions, though under conditions which put His Incarnation into continuity with all His previous operations in the world. It stakes His claim on the reality of the fact that He rose the third day from the Dead according to the Scriptures, and ascended in our humanity glorified and spiritualized⁸ into that highest sphere of Being which the Scriptures call the Right Hand of God, and shall come again to Judge the Quick and the Dead.

⁷ This is the Christian idea about Christ’s Resurrection. Granted that He is what none other is—the very Word made flesh, His Resurrection comes to be natural in His case: *κατὰ τὴν εὐλογον ἀκολουθίαν*. Athanasius, *De Inc.* xxxi. § 4.

⁸ “Spiritual” in the New Testament is never opposed to *material*, but to *carnal*. Milligan, “Resurrection,” note 15 (at the end). Christ’s Body is still material, but no doubt under

III.

THIS is the Christian Creed. It is, we must recognize, an incomplete Revelation—a Revelation which, while it gives us all that we can need to make faith sure, and hope firm, and love active, leaves a great many questions, which intellectual curiosity suggests, unanswered. It leaves the greatest Christians bowed in awful silence before the unfathomable depths of the Divine Being. We are under the discipline of ignorance. We “know in part:” we see “in a mirror:” the communication is in terms of mystery, “in a riddle.” It has reference much more to our present duty and to present grace than to giving us any clear pictures of what shall be or what has been. Again the Revelation, within its own area, does not exclude all difference of opinion. The Church in the second century embraced men of very different mental temperaments—a Clement and an Irenæus—and it should not be narrowed as it comes down the ages. St. Augustine can recognize that inside the limits of what is authoritative there is room for difference and mutual toleration.

“Cyprian,” he says, “and those with him, conditions utterly raised above the limitations of “bodies” as we know them. Science at least helps us to an immense extension and freedom in our conception of what is still *material*. “We shall see Him,” but with a vision relative to His glory, not our present sight. See Benson’s “Life beyond the Grave,” pp. 22—29.

walking in most persistent toleration, remained in unity with those who taught differently from them" on the matter, that is, of the validity of Sacraments administered by heretics. "Being most largely endowed with the holy bowels of Christian charity, he thought we ought to remain in Christian unity with those who differed from" ourselves, on a matter where there was no clear decision of the universal Church. "All these Catholic unity embraces in her motherly breast, bearing each other's burdens in turn, and endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."⁹

It is the old motto:—*In necessariis unitas: in dubiis libertas: in omnibus charitas.* If you come to the questions of our own time, it is, of course, noticeable that the Church has no definition of Inspiration, and while affirming it real, and therefore claiming from her ministers a profession of their "unfeigned belief" in the Inspired Scriptures, makes no exacter requirements as to its nature or limits.

It would be out of place here to discuss what exactly seem to be the conditions of belief which the Church of England imposes at least on her clergy. But it is the Church's Divine instinct to have focussed our faith in clear and unmistakable definition on the Person of Christ. On that, at any rate, the English branch of the Church insists with a reiterated emphasis in Creeds and Articles.

⁹ "De Baptismo," book ii. 2, 6, 7, 8.

The clear Doctrine of the Incarnation, and the Doctrine of the Trinity—which that involves—is at the least what lies behind the differences between representative Churchmen of the last generation. “My dear Pusey,” wrote Lord Shaftesbury, after the publication of a volume which anticipated the present tendency, “we will fight (about divergent opinions) another day. In this we must ‘contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints’ and it must be done together now.”¹⁰ “Do I understand you to say,” Mr. Maurice was asked, “that you desire the Creeds, the Liturgy, the Articles to be taken as tests of orthodoxy?” “I used this language,” he replied, “simply, solemnly, deliberately.”¹ “I cannot help feeling,” wrote Mr. Kingsley to Mr. Maurice, “that where the Articles assert a proposition, e.g. the Trinity, they assert that that and nothing else on the matter is true, and so bind thought; and that they require me to swear that I believe it so, and so bind my conscience. . . . For myself, I can sign the Articles in their literal sense *toto corde*, and subscription is no bondage to me, and so I am sure can you.”²

IV.

TOWARDS this Faith it seems possible to be in one of three intelligible attitudes.

(1) We may believe it. We clergy have many

¹⁰ Hodder's “Life,” vol. iii. p. 166.

¹ “Life of F. D. Maurice,” vol. i. p. 525.

² “Life of Charles Kingsley,” vol. ii. pp. 216, 217.

sins and shortcomings to deplore. Our faithfulness has been sadly imperfect. We have little cause to be proud of ourselves, perhaps. But we are—the overwhelming majority of us—at least quite sincere in our firm belief in what we preach.³ Of course we recognize that in ages

³ At least, the author of "The Kernel and the Husk" urges, the warning clauses of the Athanasian Creed are used in an unreal sense. I do not admit this. They are used in a real sense, though it may require balancing and guarding. I believe the clause "which faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly," in exactly the same sense as I believe similar general propositions about moral offenders. It needs guarding by the recognition that many men commit a sin, whether of rejecting the truth, or of theft, in external fact, without being really guilty of it. Guilt involves a certain state of will. The sin does not lie in the *act* or *word*, but in the *will* behind the act. A man is only a thief (in the eye of God) if he knows he is stealing, or a rejecter of Christ's truth if he is *wilfully* rejecting. But I believe that to reject the Divine claim of Truth is as real a sin, and as truly brings death to the soul, and separates as necessarily from eternal life, as committing adultery. I am sure that if I myself, or one circumstanced as I am, were to reject the Doctrine of the Trinity or the Incarnation, I should "without doubt perish everlastingly," and this means that all men who are really guilty of this sin (i. e. who reject not merely "materially" or in outward fact, but "formally," or in spirit) will perish in the same way. Those who have none of the temper of rejection, of course do not "reject" in the moral sense of the term. "God," says Hooker, "is said to respect adverbs more than verbs." "Their ignorant fear and love God who inspires it will accept." For them the waiting state will be a period of illumination. The formulators of the Creed, as Charles Kingsley loved to point out, believed in the intermediate state with intense reality. And it is literally true that no one will enter into the final state of salvation without a right knowledge as well as a right will. He will "think of the Trinity" rightly. The Creed (and for this we owe it a great deal of

of ignorance and superstition the Faith came to be overlaid with many accretions which must have fallen away in days of better education, no doubt with more or less of shock to traditional faith, but the Church did not (as some modern writers are apt to assume) spread or formulate her theology first of all in days of barbarism. The Faith spread—it reached its explicit formulation—in an atmosphere of Greek cultivation, and, looking back to the Rule of Faith as it was proclaimed by Irenæus, and recorded by Origen,⁴ and vindicated by the formulators and the maintainers of the Creeds, we find in it the Catholic Faith, the Faith of Scripture, the whole of which we are sure is permanent, adequate to the needs of all races and of all generations. If

gratitude) emphasizes coincidence at the last resort of right conduct and right intelligence. “They that have *done* good shall go into life everlasting, and they that have *done* evil into everlasting life.” See Mr. Page Roberts, “Liberalism in Religion,” Sermon vi.

If we are accused of interpreting the XXXIX Articles in an unreal sense, I should reply that we interpret them in their *real* sense, but that their real sense is frequently very indefinite. The Creeds express decisions. The Articles often shelve questions rather than decide them. They avoid a clear issue rather than press it. See Kingsley, “Life,” vol. ii. p. 217.

⁴ Dr. Bigg thus states Origen’s conception of the Rule of Faith, Bampton Lecture, V. init. (p. 152): We have already seen what Origen regarded as the proper task of the Christian philosopher. Tradition, embodying the teaching of the Apostles, has handed down certain facts, certain usages, which are to be received without dispute, but does not attempt to explain the why or the whence. It is the office of the sanctified reason to define, to articulate, to co-ordinate, even to expand and generally

you tell us that the Ages of Faith⁵ are past and men of enlightenment will not much longer regard the Christian Revelation as credible, first of all we doubt the truth of this; but further, if it should come to be true, we could only go back to St. Paul's warning: "Let no man deceive himself.

to adapt to human needs the faith once delivered to the Church. What, then, is the utterance of Tradition? It tells us that there is one God who created all things out of nothing, who is Just and Good, the Author of the Old as of the New Testament, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: that Jesus Christ was begotten of the Father before every creature, that through Him all things were made, that He is God and Man, born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, that He did truly suffer, rise again, and ascend into heaven: that the Holy Ghost is associated in honour and dignity with the Father and the Son, that it is He who inspired the saints both of the Old and of the New Dispensation: that there will be a resurrection of the dead, when the body which is sown in corruption will rise in incorruption, and that in the world to come the souls of men will inherit eternal life or suffer eternal punishment according to their works: that every reasonable soul is a free agent, plotted against by evil spirits, comforted by good angels, but in no way constrained: that the Scriptures were written by the agency of the Spirit of God, that they have two senses, the plain and the hidden, whereof the latter can be known only to those to whom is given the grace of the Holy Spirit in the word of wisdom and knowledge.

⁵ We speak of the "Ages of Faith." But the ready acceptance of the supernatural in those days was not in the majority of cases anything near to real Christian Faith (cf. St. Bernard, In Oct. Pasch. Serm. i. § 3). Non-moral credulity is no nearer Christian faith than many states of mind more natural to our time. An "Age of Faith" in the Christian sense there never probably has been or will be. "When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?"

If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise." If intelligence abandons faith, it will be so much the worse for intelligence. For ourselves, we hold our faith, without any obscurantism, in the light of all that we can know. So far as it is historical, we point with great reassurance to the way in which the *Evangelic Record* and *Apostolic Epistles*⁶ have emerged from the war of criticism which has assailed them this last fifty years, and we ask where in Europe you will find a criticism so impartial, so free, so strong, so learned, as the criticism of those great Cambridge divines to whom, more than to any other men, the Church of our generation owes the vindication of her *Apostolic documents* ?

We believe our Creed, then, as reasonable men, and as faithful men we only ask the liberty to take it where it is wanted. If the educated were to reject it, we would take it to the poor. If Europe should apostatize, we would take it to Asia or to Africa. Only leave it to us unimpaired—that Creed which is the secret of character—to gather those who are "Christ's sheep," and have "ears to hear," under the feet of Christ "till He come."

⁶ Old Testament criticism is no doubt still a field of great uncertainty. But the evidences of our faith rest upon the New Testament (primarily) and upon the New Testament critically treated as a collection of documents claiming to convey history. See Bishop Clifford in *Fortnightly Review* of Jan., 1887. (Reply to Mr. Vovsey).

(2) It is possible to disbelieve the Creed. Disbelievers must always face the tremendous claims, the tremendous warnings of Jesus Christ. To us they seem to leave out of account in their philosophy, the most significant facts of the moral consciousness and the spiritual history of mankind. But it is not ours, as the Apostle tells us, "to judge them that are without." "Them that are without God judges."⁷ There are "first who shall be last, and last who shall be first."

We indeed must sadly recognize how often it has been our misstatement of the Gospel of God which has prejudiced their minds against it and brought their blood on our heads. Verily we are guilty concerning our brothers. But at least this attitude of professed unbelief has in it something intelligible and something even hopeful. "God concluded all," said St. Paul, "under unbelief that He might have mercy upon all." At least frank unbelief, whether it is content to remain merely negative, or whether it takes shape in attempts to provide a substitute for the Christian religion, at least will emphasize to the consciousness of men those moral needs to which the message of the Church alone corresponds. When men have once fairly broken with the Faith they begin to find out what they have lost.

(3) Once more, it is possible for men to remain towards the Christian Faith in an attitude between belief and unbelief—in an attitude of doubt. "How long," they cry to Christ, like His

⁷ 1 Cor. v. 12, 13.

contemporaries, "how long dost Thou keep us in suspense? If Thou be the Christ, tell us *plainly.*"⁸ To this appeal He did not, He will not respond. He will provide grounds which make faith reasonable: He will not provide forcible proofs which dispense with its exercise. He deliberately appeals to, and welcomes, and meets with His Benediction, the venture of Faith. Doubters, then, are largely men who omit to take into account the important, the dominant place held in human life by the self-committing insight of Faith. How much they lose by living sceptical lives, they themselves are witnesses. Meanwhile, our "God who for the more confirmation of the Faith did suffer the Holy Apostle Thomas to be doubtful in His Son's Resurrection," may work good through their hesitancy and reward by clearer light what is often in large part an honest and sincere refusal to let spiritual expediency override the claims of truth, as it appears to them: a half-hearted fear lest the Revelation of Christ be too good to be true.

But there is a fourth attitude now proposed to us towards the Christian Creed which has none of the intelligibility, none of the justification, which belongs to the others. It is not the attitude of the hypocrite—who professes to believe what in heart he denies—but it is the frank claim to make public and solemn professions of dogmatic belief in what is with equal publicity either utterly denied or declared uncertain. It is the claim to

⁸ St. John x. 24.

adopt one tone in literature and a quite inconsistent tone in church; to appeal to God in the language of solemn supplication or adoration in virtue of facts which are, under other circumstances, declared incredible.

One writer thinks that previous declaration of opinion, and a general understanding, will enable those who agree with him to say, "I believe that the only-begotten Son of God was born of the Virgin Mary," though he writes that "there may have been a time when this illusion of His miraculous Conception did more good than harm", but "in these days it seems to me fraught with evil"; though he speaks of "the untruth that Jesus was not the son of Joseph"; or again, "I believe that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures," though he is sure His material Body rotted in the grave—

"If not where Joseph laid Him first, why then
Where other men
Translaid Him after." ⁹

Another writer¹ more boldly claims to reconcile the recitation of the Creeds, which are nothing if not dogmatic, with the complete repudiation of the idea of an authoritative Revelation, and the consequent position that we cannot make dogmatic assertions about the Personality of God, or the Creation of the world, or personal immortality.

⁹ "The Kernel and the Husk," pp. 279, 280.

¹ Canon Fremantle. See Appendix.

Oh let the conscience of men awake! The Christian Creed is a quite distinct and intelligible thing. If its reality is gone we shall gain nothing and lose everything by retaining its language. We shall gain nothing, for the words become but hollow echoes ringing with a hideous mockery in the ears of those who desire the support of truth: we shall lose everything because we introduce into the highest part of our life an atmosphere of unreality which will have an influence (depend upon it) on its other departments, undermining everywhere the foundation of reality and truthfulness, and which will appear in grosser form in less academic circles,—

Hoc fonte derivata clades
In patriam populumque fluxit.

“Oh,” men have cried, “for one hour of Socrates!” Oh for one hour of Pascal to set to work upon our new casuistry! Oh, much more, for one hour of the great Apostle to smite with his flaming sword of sincerity and truth!

We make our appeal in two quarters. We appeal to the conscience of thoughtful men. Mr. John Morley cannot, I fear, be reckoned among believers in Jesus Christ, but he can be reckoned among men to whom “it makes all the difference in the world whether we put Truth in the first place or in the second place.”

In almost prophetic tones he warns Englishmen of what has become an inveterate national characteristic, “a profound distrust of general prin-

ciples ; a profound dislike both of much reference to them, and of any disposition to invest them with practical authority ; a silent and most pertinacious measurement of philosophic truths by political tests." ² "The consequences of putting immediate social convenience in the first place and respect for truth in the second, are seen," he says, "in a distinct and unmistakable lowering of the bent of public life ; a slack and lethargic quality about public opinion ; a growing predominance of material, temporary, and selfish aims, over those which are generous, far-reaching, and spiritual ; a deadly weakening of intellectual conclusiveness, of clear-shining moral illumination ; and, lastly, of a certain stoutness of self-respect for which England was once famous. A plain categorical proposition is becoming less and less credible to average minds ; or, at least, the slovenly willingness to hold two directly contradictory propositions at one and the same time is becoming more and more common."

"Why do we say that intellectual self-respect is not vigorous, nor the sense of intellectual responsibility and truthfulness and coherency quick and wakeful among us ? Because so many people, even among those who might be expected to know better, insist on the futile attempt to reconcile the incompatible courses of belief and disbelief," and do their best "to keep society for an indefinite time sapped by hollow and void pro-

² "On Compromise," pp. 4, 14, 105, 145.

fessions, instead of being nourished by sincerity and whole-heartedness."

Who can speak words truer than these? They do not come, alas! from a Christian prophet, but John Morley can at least help us to guard the moral foundations of life against the inroads of a disastrous "compromise."

We make also another appeal. It is to Churchmen. A society which exists not primarily to seek truth, or to keep society together, or to make men comfortable, but to bear witness to a "once-for-all delivered Faith," and preach a Gospel of specific good tidings given in the Incarnation, Birth, Death, and Resurrection of the Son of God, cannot welcome into its ministry with any show of reason, men who are content, indeed, to use its language but only if they may repudiate its meaning.

No society can do this with common self-respect. We need from the Church of England a plain and explicit expression of her mind such as shall make clear her determination to hold at all costs to the truth of the Revelation which is her only ground of existence.

Some among us are gravely disquieted at the present time by the quite unscriptural bondage of the Church of England in spiritual matters to courts which are purely secular. Within the last few years a conscientious inability to recognize their claim to spiritual jurisdiction has issued in results of a very unexpected and distressing nature. But great issues are at stake, and we are rightly exhorted to have patience.

“ List, Christian warrior, thou whose heart is fain
 To loose thy Mother from her present chain.
 Christ will avenge His Bride, yet ere He save
 Thy lot shall be the grave.”

We must be patient, but it is on one condition : that we are not asked to sit still for fear of disturbing the present position of the Church, while all the time the very foundations of her doctrine are being undermined boldly and without rebuke. This would be in a terrible sense

Propter vitam vivendi perdere causas.³

George Herbert in his “ Church Militant,” presents us with the picture of the Church moving round the world, doing its work in the East, and then failing before the Muslim ; passing to the West in its mediæval glory, and there, too, as it seemed to him, sinking into secularity ; laying its hold on England, and here in turn swamped in sin and covetousness.

“ For gold and grace did never yet agree,
 Religion always sides with poverty.”

³ Mr. Gladstone, writing to Bishop Wilberforce in 1857, uses these words : “ The present position of the Church of England is gradually approximating to the Erastian theory that the business of an Establishment is to teach all sorts of doctrines and to provide Christian ordinances by way of comfort for all sorts of people, to be used at their own option. It must become, if uncorrected, in lapse of time a thoroughly immoral position. . . . The condition of the Church with respect to doctrine is gradually growing into an offence to the moral sense of mankind. . . . I feel certain that the want of combined and responsible ecclesiastical action is one of the main evils.” “ Life of Bishop Wilberforce,” vol. ii. pp. 353 sq.

So in his day it seemed to him—

“Religion stands on tiptoe in our land,
Ready to pass to the American strand.”

George Herbert's anticipations were greatly falsified. So may be, so (shall I say?) will be, the anticipations of the prophets of evil for the Church in our time. But at least we are bound, so far, to anticipate “National Apostasy,” as to recognize its possibility, and to make it quite clear that at any rate we will hand on to other nations and other times the torch alight—the city having foundations; that at least if we will not drink of the waters of life, we will not foul them with our feet.

We are looking back over the fifty years of Queen Victoria's reign. We are thanking God as for much done, so for the revival of Mission zeal in Churchmen and for the sacred memory of the many who have given their lives to the spread of the Church, even down to George Hervey Swinny, just added to the blessed band who have been witnesses for the Gospel unto death in Central Africa. But even while we give God thanks for all this recovered life and happy self-sacrifice, we must not be blind to our perils. “Because, even because, they cry peace, and there is no peace; and one builds up a wall, and lo, others daub it with untempered mortar.” There are times when Christians love to dwell not so much on the conspicuous triumphs of the Church, as on her moments of seeming weakness: on Elijah in the

desert, feeling himself alone; on Isaiah concentrating all his hopes on the faithful "remnant;" on St. Paul in prison, when everything seemed to be going wrong, and all "sought their own, not the things of Jesus Christ;" on Athanasius against the world; aye, more than all, on Jesus Christ failing for faithfulness' sake and "forsaken" on the cross. It is not because we find in our present circumstances anything which calls for an exceptional measure of loyalty or courage: still less is it in order that we may nurse ourselves in melancholy, murmuring in the spirit of the disconsolate king,—

"For heaven's sake let's sit upon the ground,
And tell strange stories of the deaths of kings."

But it is because we find in such scenes what quickens our most radiant hopes, what is the very inspiration of confidence—the assurance that God works His triumphs through methods which do not command majorities or presage success; the assurance that victory lies with the complete Truth.

Christ our adorable Master has given us no guarantee that His Faith will not be rejected by Englishmen, as it once was by the Jews, but He has given us a pledge that, though the gates of death may seem to engulf the Church, they shall not prevail against it; and meanwhile as He sits in the glory of God Who on earth was the Faithful Witness, He asks only one thing of the stewards of His Mysteries—"that a man be found *faithful*."

APPENDIX

On "The Kernel and the Husk : Letters on Spiritual Christianity," by the author of "Philochristus" and "Onesimus." Also on an article by the Hon. and Rev. Canon Fremantle, in the *Fortnightly Review* of March, 1887, entitled "The New Reformation. Part ii., Theology under its Changed Conditions."

I AM not proposing to myself any general criticism of "The Kernel and the Husk ;" I am only concerned with it from the particular point of view mentioned in this sermon. The author desires to relax the accepted conditions of Ordination and Ministry in the Church of England. He has been brought to this with great hesitation (p. 348). He now makes his claim with great reservations. The candidate for Holy Orders, or the clergyman who, having lost part of his former creed, still desires to continue his Ministry, must really believe that Jesus is the Eternal Son of God and the proper object of worship (p. 361). But he is to be dispensed from believing in Miracles, this is the point of the claim. Now the Creed and Articles (ii. and iv.) emphasize two Miracles in the plainest sense : The Miraculous Birth of our Lord and His Physical Resurrection with the consequent Ascension. The words of the Articles are : "He took again His body with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature." The Bible again not only records, but in some cases emphasizes Miracles. So do the Church Services. The candidate for Holy Orders is required to "assent to the Thirty-nine Articles and the Book of Common Prayer," as a condition of his Ordination : he must profess his "unfeigned belief" in Holy Scripture : the Ministry is exercised only in virtue of constant and public recitation of the Creeds. Yet it is proposed that a man who emphatically rejects the Virgin Birth and Physical Resurrection shall be ordained or shall continue to exercise his Ministry (pp. 278 ff., p. 256, Letters 21—23). The difficulty which this involves, the author expresses in part with great clearness (pp. 344—346). "It is one thing, in my judgment, to repeat the prayers of the Church and to read passages from the sacred books of the Church, as the mouthpiece of the

congregation, and rather a different thing to stand up and say—not only as the mouthpiece of the congregation, but in your individual character, as a Christian and as a priest as well—‘I believe this or that,’ and to take money for so saying; while all the time you are saying under your breath, ‘But I only believe it metaphorically’” (p. 346).

How does he propose to meet this difficulty? By “publicity” and a “general understanding” (pp. 344—348), and in the case of future ordinations by the acquiescence of the Bishops. They are, in fact, to dispense men, so as to allow them to say the Creed without believing the Miracles they assert (pp. 360—361). There comes into one’s mind on reading this proposal an echo of language not wanting in strength about a dispensing power which is supposed to be exercised in another Communion.

Canon Fremantle’s Article appears to go further.

It is written in view of what he conceives to be the necessity that “theology should strike boldly into the new paths (i. e. the paths opened out by the ‘new conditions’ of knowledge under which we live), not reverting to unfruitful methods which separate theology from other parts of human knowledge.”

The “new conditions” are then passed in review. “They are (1) those inspired by the advance of science and (2) of criticism; (3) those caused by the altered state of Church life (4) those caused by social and democratic progress.”

How does Canon Fremantle estimate their effect? It seems to be fairly expressed by saying that they have made the idea of a supernatural authoritative Revelation untenable. Revelation is necessarily a ground of certitude. If God has revealed Himself we can make (within the limit of that revelation) dogmatic or positive statements about Him. The essence of Revelation is a positive Message, coming on Divine authority and with Divine security, “a faith once for all delivered.” The Bible, and the Creeds which summarize the Bible Message, are thus rightly dogmatic in their tone—that is, they assert positively and simply what God has revealed in His Son. Thus Revelation is that “Divine Word” of security, which Plato makes Simmias desire so pathetically, when he felt the fallibility of human arguments on the subject of the immortality of the soul (*Phædo*, 85). Revelation gives an authoritative and positive

communication, a glorious Gospel: and Faith, relative to such a revelation, implies nothing if not certitude.

“Belief,” says Mr. Page Roberts,¹ “is not a mode of probability, it is a complete supreme act which fills the mind and moves it to confident action. Belief is the grasp of the whole nature, of head and heart combined; it is *certitude*, well put in the words of St. Paul, ‘I *know* in whom I have *believed*.’” On the other hand, induction from mere experience of our present state, arguments from our present knowledge, give at best only hopes, prospects, possibilities. This is the state to which Canon Fremantle would reduce us. Criticism, as he accounts it, has destroyed the basis of a historical Revelation. We are back where Plato was. We are all together in a common search after the character of the unknown God. What is the nature of the universal energy? Is it Personal? How did the world come into being? What are we to suppose about spheres of life other than those known to us by experience, such as Plato dreamt of, a Heaven or a Hell? What was the nature of Christ? On all these profound and interesting questions we may have opinions and hopes, but no certainty. We can no longer take “statements ready-made from Scripture” (pp. 454—455). We must do the best we can for ourselves.

I do not think I can be misinterpreting Canon Fremantle. This is the unmistakable import of what he says. It is not the denial that this or that truth is part of Revelation; it is not the assertion of this or that particular heresy; it is the denial of the whole Idea of Revelation. Then he speaks (p. 454) of “questions which admit of no solution, such as the eternity of matter, or the origin of the world, or the possibilities of other spheres of life than those known to us by experience.” This language seems unambiguous. These questions (e.g. about heaven or hell, “other spheres of life than those known to us by experience”) are only *insoluble* if a Revelation of the Being of God or the destiny of man given by One coming from behind the veil of the unseen world, is actually out of the question.

Again: we are warned of the danger of certainty about personal immortality. It is to be a hope not a certainty. It is rightly pointed out (p. 456) that Christ did bring “immortality

¹ “Liberalism in Religion,” p. 81.

to light." "After the confirmation it received by the assurance of Christ's resurrection, it became a kind of passionate certitude. The history of the Church, however, shows how such a passion may become a great danger and source of corruption; and we may expect that the theologians of the future will substitute the 'words thrown out at a great subject' for the certitude and definitions of the past. Immortality will be to them a great background of hope beyond the scene of present duty." A hope, not a certitude; and this manifestly not because the certainty of immortality does us harm; for Canon Fremantle is not an obscurantist who would conceal what is true, for purposes of edification. He means of course that the grounds on which the Apostles reached this certitude have vanished. We have no certain Revelation. We can hope, but not assert.

So it is about the character of God. If Christ reveals God as He is, so that seeing Christ is seeing God; of course we can dogmatically assert that God is Personal, i.e. that He is such a Being as can reveal the Divine Will and Love, as it is, through the will and love of the man Christ Jesus. We can also dogmatically assert that He is the Creator, and that He exists independently of all things as well as in all things, supposing that He has revealed Himself as the Absolute Being, and we have accepted His Revelation. But if all this is not the case, we are thrown back on "un grand peut-être." This is Canon Fremantle's position. It is not certain whether the theologians of the future will "endeavour to think of a transcendental God," "they will not quarrel with those who think of the Supreme Power rather after the analogy of Force or Law than according to the strict idea of Personality" (p. 454; cf. p. 445).

This is Canon Fremantle's position. I am not here concerned to argue with it. With some of his positions, as for example "that it would be perilous to rest any belief upon a supposition that the theory of evolution, even in its full compass, will be disproved" (p. 445), I should be very sorry to disagree. With the main drift of his argument I am of course in thorough disagreement. My point is here only to estimate the attitude in which his argument puts him to the Christian religion as the Church of England holds it. Canon Fremantle says of those who think with him: "We shall not find any great difficulty in

the language of the prayers and other formularies of any of the Christian denominations," therefore not in the formularies of the Church of England, of which he is a Canon. My contention is that his whole position is in flat contradiction to those formularies—especially the Creed. It is not merely that I suppose Canon Fremantle holds with the author of "The Kernel and the Husk" about the Miraculous Birth and Resurrection of Christ. He presumably denies that we have sufficient reason for believing or affirming any miracle to have occurred. I cannot otherwise interpret his language (p. 445). Moreover, he speaks in disparagement of the portions of the Evangelical narratives which record the Virgin Birth, and interprets the Resurrection *spiritually* (p. 456). If "little stress will be laid on the accounts of the infancy of Christ," we have no adequate grounds for saying, "I believe that He was born of a Virgin." If the Resurrection of Christ is to be interpreted of His spiritual Personality, clothed in the new "house which is from heaven," it would seem to be implicitly denied that in His material body He rose again, or that anything at all happened to Him "on the third day."

But we may go much deeper than this. He repudiates any such knowledge of God as can be expressed in dogmas, i.e. he repudiates all that makes a creed possible. The Athanasian Creed, he says, "where intelligible, recalls the age of controversies and condemnations" (p. 458). It does not do this in any sense in which the Nicene Creed does not do so also. The Nicene Creed is nothing except a definitive decision of a controversy in virtue of a Divine Revelation.² No one can say, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, and of all things visible and invisible," or "I believe in

² "In speaking of Gibbon's work to me," writes Mr. Froude of Thomas Carlyle, "he made one remark which is worth recording. In earlier years he had spoken contemptuously of the Athanasian controversy, of the Christian world torn in pieces over a diphthong: and he would ring the changes in broad Annandale on the Homocousion and the Homoiouision. He now told me that he perceived Christianity itself to have been at stake. If the Arians had won, it would have dwindled away to a legend."—"Thomas Carlyle: Life in London," vol. ii. p. 462.

the Resurrection of the body and the Life everlasting," who regards "the eternity of matter,³ the origin of the world, the possibilities of other spheres of life than those known to us by experience," as "questions which admit of no solution." No one can say, "I believe in the only-begotten Son of God, of one substance with the Father," and at the same time "put aside the long controversies which began in the third century about the Nature of Christ" (p. 455). He is simply affirming the dogmatic decision of the first of those controversies. No one who thinks that the conditions of thought "will make men much more cautious in framing dogmas about his (Christ's) divinity," and who understands by His divinity only "His moral supremacy as a spiritual power," can say, "I believe in the only-begotten Son of God, God of God, very God of very God." All these are permanent dogmas, not "words thrown out at a great subject" (p. 453), nor do they admit of being regarded as tentative expressions of truth, "always liable to revision" (p. 454). To say that the objects of theology "must be sought by other paths than those of speculation which result in the formation of dogmas" (p. 452), disqualifies a man from categorically affirming the dogmas.

Thus I feel no fear—I should rather say no hope—that I am misinterpreting Canon Fremantle. His position towards Revelation is in blank contradiction to the whole certitude of the Creed, and his attitude towards the Bible, I must add, is, on the most charitable interpretation, quite inconsistent with the position of one who accepted his Ministry on the condition of professing his "unfeigned belief in all the Canonical scriptures of the Old and New Testament." The theologians of the future will be "careful," he tells us, "not to contravene the laws of nature." It is no doubt well that they should be so. One is inclined to hope they will be equally careful not to contravene another set of laws.

³ I must point out that the Church used the word *ποιητής* (Factor, Creator) in definite insistence on the idea of absolute creation, creation "out of nothing," and in opposition to the idea of a pre-existing matter. See Athanasius, *De Inc.* 2, 3; Westcott, "Historic Faith," p. 38; Pearson "On the Creed," art. 1, pp. 88-96.

LUX MUNDI

PREFACE TO THE TENTH EDITION

TOGETHER WITH

AN APPENDIX

ON

THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF SIN

LONDON

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET

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PREFACE TO THE TENTH EDITION.

I.

THERE are two things which may fairly be regretted in regard to the criticisms—often the very kind and encouraging criticisms—which this book has received. There is, first, the disproportionate attention which has been given to some twenty pages on the subject of the inspiration of Holy Scripture, an attention so disproportionate as to defeat the object which the writers had in view in assigning to that subject its place in the general treatment of the work of the Holy Spirit—the object, namely, of giving it its proper context in the whole body of Christian truth: and there is, secondly, the fact that we have not generally succeeded in gaining the attention of our critics to the point of view from which these ‘studies’ were written, and the purpose they were intended to serve.

Our purpose was ‘to succour a distressed faith’ by endeavouring to bring the Christian Creed into its right relation to the modern growth of knowledge, scientific, historical, critical; and to the modern problems of politics and ethics¹. We were writing as for Christians, but as for Christians perplexed by new knowledge which they are required to assimilate and new problems with which they are required to deal. What is needed to help men in such perplexity is not compromise, for

¹ By the phrase ‘to attempt to put the Catholic faith into its right relation to modern intellectual and moral problems’ (Preface to First Edition) it was not by any means intended to suggest that the modern problems or the modern sciences were the things of the first import-

ance and the faith only secondary. What was intended was that, as holding the Faith, we needed, as the Church has often needed, to bring that with which we are ourselves identified, into relation to the claims, intellectual and practical, made upon us from outside.

compromise generally means tampering with principle, but readjustment, or fresh correlation, of the things of faith and the things of knowledge. In detail this will, no doubt, involve concessions, and that on both sides, because both sides have been liable to make mistakes¹; but in the main what is to be looked for is a reconciliation which shall at once set the scientific and critical movement, so far as it is simply scientific and critical, free from the peril of irreligion, and the religious movement free from the imputation of hostility to new knowledge—as free as any movement can be, which is intensely concerned to nourish and develop what is permanent and unchanging in human life. Such a reconciliation has more than once been effected in the past, though never without a preliminary period of antagonism²: our confidence that it will be effected anew in the future lies partly in the fact that we see it already taking place in some minds which seem to us to represent the best life and thought of our time both scientific and religious. One such at least³ we knew and have lost, though only from present intercourse, in Aubrey Moore. Nobody could know him and think of him as ‘compromising’ either his faith or his science. He lived primarily and with deepest interest in his religious life and theological study, but he lived also with intense reality in the life of science. And the debt we owe to him, over and above the debt under which his personal character lays us for ever, is that of having let us see how the two lives of faith and of science can melt into one. He felt indeed and wrestled with the difficulties of adjustment. He had not, as it seemed to

¹ Cf. Dr. Pusey, *University Sermons*, 1864–1879. ‘Unscience, not science, contrary to faith,’ pp. 18 ff.

² Cf. the history of the relations of the Church to Aristotelian philosophy: Milman, *Latin Christianity*, ed. 4, vol. ix. pp. 110 ff.; and later the relations

of Christianity to the Copernican astronomy: Salmon, *Infallibility of the Church*, p. 230.

³ See the tribute to his memory by Mr. G. J. Romanes: *Guardian*, Jan. 29, 1890.

us, nearly finished his work in this respect. But he had done enough for our encouragement: enough to help us to believe that the best minds of the future are to be neither religious minds defying scientific advance, nor scientific minds denying religion, but minds in which religion interprets and is interpreted by science, in which faith and enquiry subsist together and reinforce one another. The reason why he should have been so soon taken from us and from the Church on earth—taken when ‘our need was the sorest’—lies in the impenetrable mysteries of God. ‘Si dolemus ablatum, non tamen obliviscimur quod datus fuit, et gratias agimus quod habere illum meruimus . . . Pusillus corde eram et confortabat me; piger et negligens, et excitabat me¹.’

II.

It seems to us that a due regard to the point of view from which these studies were written would have obviated some of the criticisms upon them. For instance, it would have explained why we forbore to enter upon the questions which may be raised as to the seat and methods of Church authority. It was because these questions do not arise practically till the work has been done to which we were attempting to minister. When a man is once reassured that his faith in Christ is capable of rational justification, he begins naturally to enquire what exactly the Christian religion involves in this or that detail, and how its manifestly authoritative character, as a Divine Revelation, is to find expression: but these enquiries hardly begin till the preliminary reassurance has been gained.

The *moral* authority of Christianity, of Christian lives and characters, does indeed exercise a determining influence on the

¹ From S. Bernard's most touching sermon (*in Cant.* 26) on the death of his brother Gerard.

promotion and recovery of faith ; but men do not often either win a hold on the creed for the first time, or recover it where it has been lost or impaired, because the theological authority of the Church enables them to take it on trust. The very grounds of that authority are for the moment too much in question to admit of the proper amount of deference being given to it. Thus it seemed to us better in this volume to be content with general statements as to the principle of Church authority¹, leaving out its detailed discussion as unsuitable to our present purpose.

Of course, however, we were conscious all the time that we were ourselves amenable to the bar of authority and were bound to feel sure that nothing we were saying was transgressing the laws which the Catholic Church has laid down. We should indeed be unanimous in disclaiming any desire to have 'license to say what we please' in our position as Church teachers. All meaning would be taken out of the effort and hope this book represents if we could not believe that we were speaking as the Church would have us speak. As the essay on Inspiration has been chiefly called in question on the ground of authority, the author of it must be allowed to plead that he did assure himself he was saying nothing which the Church in her past action had not left him free to say, while for the future he does earnestly desire in due course, and after due enquiry, an action of Church authority on the relation of modern critical methods to the doctrine of Inspiration ; and further he believes that the Anglican churches, holding as they do so conspicuous a place in traditional reverence for the Scriptures, while they are so free on the other hand from the obscurantist fear of historical enquiry, are more likely than any other part of the Church to arrive at determinations on the subject such as will be of material service to the whole of

¹ See Essay VI. pp. 226-227, 250 ff. ; Essay VIII. pp. 324-327 ; and Essay IX. pp. 384-390.

Christendom. But for the present there can be no doubt the subject is not ripe for any official or formal determinations.

III.

It seems to us also that some of the criticisms on the treatment of Inspiration in Essay VIII, which shall be presently dealt with, have been due to the same forgetfulness of the writer's aim, and of the general aim of the whole book. Our traditional belief in the Bible is at the present time confronted with a body of critical literature which claims to overthrow a great many of the accepted opinions about the Old Testament Scriptures. The criticism is at least grave and important enough to claim attention, to necessitate that we should come to a more or less clear understanding of the relation in which our faith stands towards it. The writer of the essay did not write as a biblical critic but as a theological student and teacher, bound to give a candid consideration to a criticism which bears directly upon the sacred books of our religion. His object was not to discuss and determine questions of biblical criticism, but to explain, as it appears to him, the relation which theology is to take up towards them. And he wrote 'in the mind of those who have felt the trouble in the air : ' he wrote to succour a faith distressed by the problems criticism is raising. That faith is very widely distressed by them, and that not merely in academic circles, does not admit of question. Nor did it seem to him to admit of question that the best way to deal with this distress was not to attempt to solve problems, which, because of the immense area over which discussion ranges, do not admit of ready solutions ; but to attempt to state the main conclusions criticism is claiming to have arrived at, as the critics themselves would have us state them ; to show that our Christian faith is not vitally affected by

them ; and so to divert an anxious mind from problems which it cannot solve, at least at present, and fix it on the central truths of our religion, helping it to feel how, if it be once grounded on these central truths, the issue of the critical discussion can be awaited, with keen interest indeed, but without alarm. But this assurance of mind in face of the critical controversy is only possible if we see that the critical positions are in fact compatible with the real *inspiration* of Holy Scripture. Now the best way to give reassurance on this point seemed to be for the writer to make it plain that he himself felt the great force and appeal of the critical case, and that his conviction that the real Inspiration of the Old Testament was unaffected by it, did not depend upon its being underrated. Had the main purpose of the writer been to help to determine critical positions, he would have been bound to write both at greater length and also with more exactness and discrimination. But on the other hand, the purpose of reassurance would have had less chance of being successfully accomplished—as in some cases we have reason to believe with thankfulness that it has been accomplished or assisted—if the writer had been more reluctant to accept, at least hypothetically, what are claimed as critical results. We all know by experience that freedom and happiness in our attitude as Christians towards problems not easily solved, or even easily brought to crucial tests, are most readily secured if we can feel that our faith is, at the last resort, independent of the exact solution arrived at. Thus our object was to give to anxious enquirers, of whom there are surely an immense number most deserving of any help which can be given them, a freedom in regard to Old Testament problems as wide as the Catholic faith seemed to warrant.

IV.

We cannot but accept the very general suggestion of our critics that we ought to have attempted a separate treatment of the problem of sin. Some such treatment is now offered in the second appendix, and offered in the form of a republication of what has previously seen the light, so that it may be plain that the absence of it from earlier editions was not due to lack of conviction or unwillingness to deal with the subject. The appendix is not in fact more than a drawing out of what is involved in some passages of the essays taken together¹. Thus the fifth essay takes up a very clear position as to the practical aspect which sin bears in human life. The fact is emphasized that sin, as our moral consciousness knows it and Christianity has successfully dealt with it, is a phenomenon unique in the world:—it is what nothing else is, violation of law. Now this is the essence of the Christian doctrine of sin, as S. John states it: ‘Sin is lawlessness².’ Sin and lawlessness are coincident terms. This view of sin is primarily *practical*; it may be represented in fact as a postulate required for successfully dealing with sin, a postulate justified and verified by its results. But because it is thus verified and justified, it passes like any other hypothesis which explains facts, in proportion to the range and thoroughness of the experience which tests it, out of the region of mere working hypotheses into that of accepted truths. Thus it is to the Christian consciousness an accepted truth, that sin, all down the long history of humanity, has been a violation of the divine order, a refusal of obedience, a corruption of man’s true nature. Sin, as such, has always been a source of confusion, not of progress. We

¹ See Preface, p. ix. note 1.

² Cf. Dr. Westcott’s note on 1 S. John iii. 4, ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐστὶν ἡ ἀνομία.

can indeed recognise how the movement and development in humanity has frequently¹ been in fact conditioned by sin; but we should still contend that it has never been the sin in itself which has been the spring of force and progress, but the faculties of will and intellect which sin was using. Always the will and intellect would have worked better and more fruitfully in the result if they had been free from the taint of selfishness and rebellion against God. Always sin, as such, has been a lowering and not a raising of human life: a fall and not a rise. Thus sin at the beginning of human life must have been not merely the awakening of moral consciousness, but the obscuring and tainting of it by lawlessness and disobedience. Sin, as all down its history, so in its origin, is a fall; a fall, moreover, entailing consequences on those who come after, in virtue of the inviolable solidarity of the human race. To this view of sin original and actual, Christianity appears to be bound; and it is a view that, as we have now endeavoured to show², brings us into no conflict with scientific discovery. For science never attempts to prove that man might not have developed otherwise than as in fact he has, or that the actual development has been the best possible: nor has Christianity ever in its best representatives, certainly not in its patristic representatives, been identified with a denial that human history as a whole has been a development upwards from below³. The Old Testament is in fact among ancient literatures, the literature of development, of progress⁴.

¹ Cf. F. Lenormant, *Les Origines de l'histoire*. Paris, 1880, t. 1, p. 191. 'C'est dans la race de Qain que la Bible place l'invention des arts et des métiers. "Les fils du siècle sont plus habiles que les enfants de lumière."'

² Cf. p. 534.

³ Cf. p. 535, note 1.

⁴ Cf. F. Lenormant, *Les Origines*, t. 1, pp. 63-66. It is a pleasure to refer to this work by a distinguished Catholic and man of learning. The Preface is an admirable discussion of the relation of scientific enquiry to belief in Inspiration.

V.

The criticisms on our treatment of Inspiration have been so abundant, and have gone into such detail, that it will be obvious that any attempt to reply to them must be a more individual effort than the attempt to reply to the criticisms on the general aim and spirit of the book. For while the writers in this volume are at one as to the general attitude which they would wish the Church to assume towards the critical treatment of the Old Testament, as they are at one in the general line of treatment adopted throughout this volume, they cannot pretend to be at one on all the details of a complicated subject. The writer of the particular essay alone can be responsible for these: and with reference to them he must be understood to speak simply in his own person.

1. The passage about Inspiration was written under the conviction that recent criticism of the Old Testament represents a real advance in analytical method as applied to literature, and thus a most serious movement of thought. As such it has been estimated by the Bishop of Oxford in his recent Charge. He says, 'The Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament are now going through a process of analytical criticism which has, as we believe, had no parallel, for acuteness of investigation, carefulness of method, and completeness of apparatus, since the days in which they began to be regarded as a code of inspired literature, and certainly not since the days of our blessed Lord's life on earth; at which period we understand that to all intents and purposes the books which we receive, as the Canonical Old Testament Scriptures, had taken their existing form¹.' But like the scientific movement of our time, the critical movement has been accompanied by all the arbitrariness and tendency to push things to extremes which appears

¹ *Oxford Diocesan Gazette*, July, 1890 (Parker, Oxford), p. 91.

to be an almost inseparable attendant upon living and vigorous movements, ecclesiastical and secular. Further than this, its representatives have been—and here again the conditions of the scientific movement are reproduced—very frequently men personally opposed to the Christian faith, and even thoroughly rationalistic in temper and tone. But it does not follow in the case of criticism, any more than in the case of science, that we are not to learn a great deal from a movement characterized even predominantly by ‘extremeness’ and unbelief. And in fact, in the past fifty years there appears to have been a solid critical advance, underneath a great deal of controversial arbitrariness and irreligious insolence. Now I thought that I should best serve the purpose with which I was writing, if I went as far as I could in ungrudging recognition of the claims of criticism, and involved myself as little as possible in doubtful discussions; but I did also intend to express, and believed myself to have expressed with sufficient clearness¹, my own conviction that it was with the more conservative among the recent critics, and not with the more extreme, that the victory would lie. Thus when I said, in a sentence which has been specially criticized (partly because its wording was somewhat ambiguous), that criticism is reaching ‘results as sure as scientific enquiry,’ what I intended so to characterize was not the extreme conclusions of Wellhausen, but substantially the conclusions shared in common by Wellhausen and Dillmann, by critics theologically more conservative, like König and Riehm, by Delitzsch in his last position, by the French Catholic orientalist, F. Lenormant, as well as by an increasing body of English scholars². Nor is there a single

¹ The summary statements on pp. 351–2 as to the historical character of the Old Testament represent, I believe, a ‘conservative’ attitude, an attitude towards the history very unlike that, for instance, of Wellhausen.

² See Ed. Riehm, *Einleitung in das A. T.* (Halle, 1889), §§ 15–18, 24, 27. F. E. König, *Offenbarungsbegriff des A. T.* (Leipzig, 1882), t. II, pp. 321 ff. Cf. also *Hauptprobleme der Altisr.-Religionsgesch.* (Leipzig, 1884). F. Delitzsch, *Genesis*, Clark’s trans. (Edinb., 1888),

line of what I wrote which would be affected, so far as I see, even if Professor Margoliouth were satisfactorily to make out his case for throwing back the period of the 'Middle Hebrew¹.' As to the grounds on which we have been asked to date the bulk of the Psalms below the Captivity, and even in the Maccabean period, they may appear indeed quite unconvincing; but it would have been utterly beside my purpose, as it would also have been out of my power, to give them adequate discussion², nor would it seem as if even so improbably late a date as that suggested would really affect their Messianic or spiritual character. Let us affirm then without any hesitation that there is a good deal of arbitrariness and extremeness in current criticism as applied to the Old Testament. But surely we should be the victims of a dangerous delusion if we were to imagine that because there is a good deal that is unsubstantial in recent criticism, therefore there is no substantial force in what really represents the successive labours of many generations of students. I do not think that we can conceal

i. 19-38. F. Lenormant, *Les Origines*, Préface. I venture to think that those who want to study the modern criticism of the Old Testament would be less likely to be prejudiced against it if they were to begin their study with the assistance of Riehm and König, rather than of more rationalistic scholars. I ought to add that while the scholars mentioned above agree substantially as to the analysis of the Pentateuch, they differ as to the position assigned to the Priestly Code, which Dillmann and Riehm hold to be prior to Deuteronomy, Wellhausen, König and Delitzsch subsequent to it.

¹ *Essay on the place of Ecclesiasticus in Semitic Literature*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1890, pp. 20, 21. I allude to this essay because it has excited considerable interest, but it has not received favourable notice from critics either

English or German. For a review by a very competent critic, see Prof. Nöldeke in the *Lit. Centralblatt*, July 12, 1890.

² I may say that the motive for what is said about Ps. cx on p. 359 was simply the conviction that our Lord in the passage there in question cannot fairly be taken as giving instruction on a critical question of authorship, not the difficulty of assigning the particular Psalm to the age of David. The solution which I propose, p. 359, as to our Lord's words is however only one of several which are possible even for those who agree with me in the conviction expressed above. See, for instance, Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (London, 1884), ii. p. 406, and Bp. Thirlwall as quoted in Dean Perowne's *Commentary on the Psalms* (London, 1871), ii. pp. 302 ff.

from ourselves that if we are to defend a purely conservative attitude in regard to Old Testament literature, we shall require quite different canons of evidence from those which we are able so successfully to use in vindicating the historical character of the New Testament: or again, in vindicating the claims of the apostolic ministry and the sacramental system to be part of the original fabric of the Christian Church. In other words, the critical principles of historical enquiry which *do* so amply justify us in retaining substantially the traditional position in regard as well to the New Testament documents as to our Church principles, *do not* carry us to the same point in the field of the Old Testament. No doubt there the vastness of the field is a permanent obstacle to uniformly certain results. A great deal must remain, and probably for ever, more or less an open question. But this necessary uncertainty, if it imposes on critics an obligation of caution, imposes also on us churchmen an obligation of reserve in dogmatic requirement. We do not wish to run the risk of making a claim on men's minds for the acceptance of positions for which we have only this to urge, that they cannot be absolutely disproved.

2. The changed view of the development of Old Testament literature, such as can be truly said to be proposed for our acceptance by modern critics with a great deal of unanimity, *if it be granted for the moment that it is compatible with the real inspiration of the books*, involves no important change in our spiritual use of the Old Testament; in the use of it for the purposes of 'faith and morals.' This latter use of Scripture depends simply on our rightly interpreting the meaning of the books as they exist.

There is a great principle enunciated by S. Augustine in regard to the Old Testament which requires to be kept constantly in view. It is that as the Old Testament is manifested in the New, so the New Testament is latent in

the Old¹. In order to recognize this there is no discussion necessary of the method by which our 'Old Testament' received its present shape. The evidence of it lies in the Old Testament considered as a finished product. As such, we cannot study that 'divine library' without being struck both by its unity, so far greater than belongs to any other literature², and by the fact that like no other literature it looks forward to an end not yet attained, a divine event in which is to be its justification and its interpretation. The Old Testament demands the New to bring out its true meaning: the New appeals back to the Old to bear witness to the continuity of the divine purpose of which it is the outcome. It is from this point of view that we understand the appeal which, in the New Testament, is so constantly made to the older Scriptures. Whether they are appealed to, as in the Sermon on the Mount, as containing the record of a moral education, divine though imperfect, which the Christ was to complete³; or as by St. Paul, as the record of a preparatory and temporary discipline by means of external enactments of God, calculated to awaken the dull conscience of men to the reality and holiness of the divine will, and so to make men conscious of sin against God, and ready to welcome the dispensation of pardon and grace⁴; or, as in the Epistle to the Hebrews, as a system of ritual and ceremonial observances, in which were

¹ S. Augustine, *Quest. 73 in Exod.*: 'Quamquam et in vetere [Testamento] novum lateat, et in novo vetus pateat.' Quoted by Dr. Liddon, *The worth of the Old Testament*, p. 28.

² Cf. Didymus in *Psalm. xxi.* 19, where he interprets Christ's 'seamless robe,' of the Holy Scriptures which they 'part' who accept one and reject another. 'This robe of Jesus is also indivisible, for it is seamless. Its unity is not enforced but natural [οὐ γὰρ βεβιασμένην ἔνωσιν ἀλλὰ συμφυῆ

ἔχει]: it is 'from above' [from the top, A.V.] because it is inspired; it is 'woven throughout,' because in its whole force it is from above.'

³ S. Matt. v. 17-48, cf. xix. 8: 'Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts,' etc.

⁴ After S. Paul, S. Augustine is the great exponent of this principle in early days; see esp. *de spiritu et littera*, xix. (34): *Lex ergo data est ut gratia quaereretur: gratia data est ut lex impleretur.*

shadowed forth by the inspiring Spirit¹ the deep truths of the still-needed sacrifice, and the access to God not yet won for man; or finally, as by almost all the New Testament writers, as a prophetic dispensation in which the Messianic hope found gradual expression in fuller and exacter lineaments, and produced an anticipation which Christ only could satisfy²:— from any of these points of view, or from all taken together, we are concerned only with the Old Testament as it finally appears, not with the method by which it came into being. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that when we seek reassurance in regard to the inspiration of those books of the Old Testament, to which our Lord and His Church refer us, we find it primarily in the substance of the books as they are given to us, not in any considerations of the manner in which they came into existence³.

And if this is so, it needs to be borne in mind that the responsibility for bringing it home to the consciences of men, the responsibility for thus preventing that breach in religious continuity which the change in critical and literary conceptions of the Old Testament might otherwise occasion, lies in a preeminent degree upon those of us who are most impressed with the valid elements of the recent criticism. It belongs to us to see to it that, so far as lies with us, the Bible shall not be less prized by the generations that are coming, as the divine, the inspired volume, than it has been by the generations

¹ See esp. Heb. ix. 8, 'The Holy Spirit this signifying;' and cf. Dr. Westcott on this Epistle, pp. 233 ff.

² I would venture to recommend Riehm's *Messianic Prophecy* (Clark's trans.), as a summary account of prophecy both reverent and critical.

³ Cf. Hooker's account of our grounds for believing that 'Scripture . . . is divine and sacred.' 'By experience,' he says, 'we all know, that the first outward motive leading men so to esteem of the Scripture is the authority of God's Church. . . . After-

wards the more we bestow our labour in reading or hearing the mysteries thereof, the more we find that the thing itself doth answer our received opinion concerning it.' Later again, as against 'infidels or atheists,' we must 'maintain the authority of the books of God . . . by such kind of proofs . . . that no man living shall be able to deny it, without denying some apparent principle such as all men acknowledge to be true.' *E. P.* III. viii. 14.

that are gone. It belongs to us to attend to the double admonition of the *De Imitatione*: 'Every scripture must be read in the same spirit in which it was written:' and 'Do not enquire who said this, but pay heed to what is said.'

3. There is one appeal which the New Testament makes to the Old which was not alluded to above, as it does not in fact fall naturally under S. Augustine's principle of the New Testament lying hid in the Old—namely the appeal to it as to a historical record of God's actual dealings with His people: a record of things which actually 'happened unto them for examples, and are written for our admonition.' But this appeal again would not be invalidated unless it were shown—not merely that there is an ideal element mixed with the history in the Old Testament record, but—that the element which is not mere narrative of events as they happened, the element of idealism, reaches to the point of obscuring the real significance of the facts and distorting their divine meaning. Whereas the truth is that the ideal element in the narrative comes from the real divine meaning in the facts being brought into emphatic prominence rather than overlooked; and we may depend upon it that no results of criticism have tended to weaken our belief that the chroniclers of Israel's history, whether prophetic or priestly, were inspired to see its true meaning and tendency, and from their different points of view to bring it out in its completeness. And it is important to remember in this connection that the Jewish idea of 'history' was never our modern critical idea of a mere record. They ranked their history from Joshua to the books of Kings under the head of 'prophecy,' and intimate to us by this very classification that they see in the historian one who not only records but interprets facts¹.

¹ The Chronicles and the later historical books, as is well known, were included in the third class of 'Hagiographa' with the Psalmists and

Moralists.

The truth of this paragraph depends upon (1) the character, (2) the extent of the idealism of Old

4. The changed view of the Old Testament books which modern criticism asks of us, concerns, then, not so much their contents, as the circumstances of their composition and the method by which they reached their present form. When we pass to this latter class of considerations we are prepared for any information which criticism or tradition can give us, while at the same time our indestructible conviction, fortified by the strongest internal testimony of the books, that here is the Holy Spirit's work, gives us an antecedent expectation that the mode of composition in the case of each book will be such as God in His condescension can have sanctioned and used. God, I say, in His condescension—because undoubtedly the whole Old Testament does represent a condescension of God to a low stage of human development. Here then we need the recognition of a second great principle which S. Augustine lays down, viz. that 'as wrong is done to the Old Testament if it be denied to come from the just and good God, so wrong is done to the New if it be put on a level with the Old¹.'

For all the reality of its inspiration the Old Testament is on a lower level than the New. Thus it is now almost universally recognised that God in the Old Testament is seen appealing to the human conscience at a low stage of its development, tolerating what was not according to His original will or His ultimate purpose², as in the case of divorce, and even,

Testament facts. On this something more is said later on. Here I am only concerned to distinguish an idealism which truly interprets facts, even if it throws their spiritual meaning into high relief, from a merely imaginative treatment which perverts and distorts them. Thus if the Chronicler idealizes, it is by emphasizing, beyond the point of actual fact, the priestly element in the history which at the same time did both really

exist and really represent the divine purpose.

¹ *De Gestis Pelag.* v. (15), 'Sicut veteri Testamento si esse ex Deo bono et summo negetur, ita et novo fit injuria si veteri aequetur.' S. Augustine does not perhaps carry out the recognition of this principle as fully as some other of the Fathers: for refs. see pp. 229 ff.

² S. Matt. xix. 8.

as in the case of Abraham's sacrifice, appealing to men to do things which in a more fully developed state of the conscience could not be even conceived of as commanded by God, in order that through their very obedience to the appeal they might be led higher into the knowledge of what God could, and could not, enjoin. How fully this principle in God's dealings was recognised and justified by the early Christian authorities has been already brought out in this volume¹.

Again, the same method of condescending to what was not in itself perfect, but was susceptible of a gradual education, appears in the institutions of the Old Testament law of worship. Modern enquirers are pressing upon us the fact that the ritual law of Israel is closely akin to the common ritual customs of Semite races. 'What I may call the natural basis of Israel's worship,' says Prof. Robertson Smith, 'was very closely akin to that of the neighbouring cults.'² The peculiarity of Israel's religion lay in fact not in the ritual itself, but in the moral and theological turn given to the ritual. According to this view God in the law appears as diverting to good uses, by an act of condescension, ritual customs which it would have been premature to abolish. Such a view of the ritual is somewhat strange to the ears of modern Churchmen, but it was undoubtedly the prevalent view of the law among the great writers of Christian antiquity. References to illustrate this have been given in the eighth essay³.

But I may add to the passages there referred to another of very striking force. S. Chrysostom is explaining why God should have appealed to the astrological notions of the wise men and led them by no other leading than that of a star. It is because 'in exceeding condescension He calls

¹ See pp. 329 ff.

² *Religion of the Semites*. Edinburgh, 1889, p. 4.

³ p. 329, note 2. The passage here

added is from S. Chrysost. *in Matt.* vi. 3. The same idea is discerned by Bp. Lightfoot in S. Paul; see on Gal. iv. 11.

them through what is familiar . . . In imitation of this Paul too reasons with the Greeks from an altar, and adduces testimony from the poets, while he harangues the Jews with circumcision, and makes from the sacrifices a beginning of instruction for those who are living under the law. For since to every one familiar things are dear, therefore both God Himself and the men who were sent from God, with a view to the salvation of the world, manage things on this principle. Think it not then unworthy of Him to have called them by a star; for by the same rule thou wilt find fault with all the Jewish rites also—both the sacrifices and the purifications and the new moons, and the ark, and the temple itself. For all these things had their origin from Gentile grossness. Yet God, on account of the salvation of those in error, endured to be worshipped by means of the very things through which those outside were worshipping demons, only giving them a slight alteration, that little by little he might draw them away from their customs and lead them up to the high philosophy.’

Now if we recognize that God in the Old Testament can condescend for the purposes of His revelation to a low stage of conscience, and a low stage of worship, what possible ground have we for denying that He can use for purposes of His inspiration literary methods also which belong to a rude and undeveloped state of intelligence? If He can ‘inspire’ with true teaching the native Semite customs of ritual, why can He not do the same with their traditions of old time? How can we reasonably deny that the earlier portions of Genesis *may* contain the simple record of primitive prehistoric tradition of the Semites¹, moulded and used by the Holy Spirit, as

¹ I use the word ‘myth’ for those primitive stories on p. 356. The legitimacy of this use may be disputed, see e. g. Riehm, *Einleitung*, p. 242. But I endeavour to explain exactly the sense in which the word

is used. On Strauss’s application of the myth theory to the Gospel narratives, I should quite assent to the remarks of Dr. Mill, *Mythical Interpretation of the Gospels* (Cambridge, 1861), pp. 97, 98.

on all showing the record manifestly has been moulded and used, to convey the fundamental principles of all true religion? Or again, granted that, on the 'dramatic' hypothesis, Deuteronomy written not by Moses, but in Moses' name, to incorporate the Mosaic tradition, represents a literary method greatly inferior, in sense of exactitude, to the method of personal testimony as we have it in S. John¹, or of careful investigation and use of original testimony, as we have it in S. Luke²; granted this—how can we, in view of the manifest facts of God's condescension, find ourselves in a position to deny, that He can have used such a method as a vehicle of His inspiration³? There is, it must be emphasized, no critical reason why we should assign the composition of any book of the Old Testament to the motive of fraud. No doubt hostile critics have sometimes suggested, for example, that the 'discovery' of the book of the law in the Temple in the days of Josiah was a 'got up' proceeding, the book having really been written and hidden at the very time in order to be 'discovered'; but there is no positive evidence at all to support such a view, while all the evidence is satisfied by the hypothesis that an earlier prophet, some hundred years previously⁴, working upon an actual and possibly written tradition of Moses' last speech, had cast this tradition into the dramatic form and promulgated, as from Moses' lips, the law which he knew to represent ultimately Moses' authority or the authority of God in Moses. That such a method should have been adopted surprises us surely no more than that

¹ S. John i. 14, xix. 35, xxi. 24; I S. John i. 1-3.

² S. Luke i. 1-4.

³ I would call attention in this connection to Dr. Salmon's remarks on S. Jude's use, even in the New Testament canon, of the traditions contained in the Assumption of Moses, and his quotation of the book of Enoch: see at the end of his lecture

on S. Jude's Epistle in the *Introduction to the New Testament*.

⁴ Cf. Riehm, *Einleitung*, i. p. 246: 'Das Gesetzbuch kann nicht erst unter Josia geschrieben sein, sondern es muss spätestens zur Zeit des Hiskia entstanden sein, und zwar bevor dieser König seine Reformation ganz durchgeführt hatte.'

Hosea should have been led to use such extraordinary means, as he seems in fact to have been enjoined to use, of revealing God's mind of love towards His people. It involves no intention to deceive, and the discovery of this 'book of the law,' lost in the careless period which intervened, was a genuine discovery unattended by any element of fraud.

Once again, if the book of Chronicles contains not pure history but the priestly view of the history, granted that this priestly point of view was *morally* part of the divinely intended education of the chosen people, even though its intellectual method was as imperfect as ordinarily is the case with the treatment of traditions in 'schools' or religious orders, in nations or churches or families, is there any *a priori* reason why God, who used so much that was imperfect, should not have inspired the record of this tradition? Here again we must emphasize that all that *criticism* requires of us is to recognise in the book of Chronicles the record of the history as it became coloured in the priestly schools; there is nothing here of a morally unworthy sort from the point of view of the contemporary conscience, but only the same features as are noticeable in the record of tradition all the world over¹. Fraudulent dealing, forgery in literature, always involves the conscious and deliberate use of methods calculated to impose on others, *methods other than those sanctioned by the literary conscience of the time*².

No doubt a particular writer, like Wellhausen, may make a bias hostile to the supernatural apparent in his use of the

¹ A common feature in all traditions is what Wellhausen describes as the main characteristic of the Chronicler, 'the timeless manner of looking at things which is natural to him.' He 'figures the old Hebrew people as in exact conformity with the pattern of the later Jewish community.' *Proleg. to Hist. of Israel* (Edinburgh, 1885), pp. 190-193. In

tradition what *is* authoritative tends to be represented as what *always has been* authoritative.

² Thus the Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals are properly called forgeries; and the evidence of this would lie in the fact that the author could not have afforded to disclose the method and circumstances of their production.

critical method, and may give in consequence an antitheological turn to his reconstruction of history; just as many a scientific writer has done with scientific facts and scientific method. In view of this we must 'try the spirits' and not attribute too much force to the point of view of a particular individual. But this will not be at all the same thing as rejecting the modern method of criticism or repudiating those results which are certainly accepted by many critics who are as far as possible from rejecting the supernatural¹.

5. No serious attempt has, I think, been made to show that the view of the development of the Old Testament literature which the modern critical schools, with great unanimity, demand of us, is contrary to any determination of Church authority. By this it is not meant that the theology of the Church suggests this view: it is not the function of the Church to advance literary knowledge, except indirectly; and thus the Church has not had the power to anticipate the critical, any more than it had to anticipate the scientific movement. The advance of knowledge comes in all departments through the natural processes of intellectual enquiry. It is only now, in fact, that the critical problem is before the Church; but now that it is before the Church it does not seem that the Church ought to have any *more* difficulty in welcoming it and assimilating it, than it has had in welcoming and assimilating the legitimate claims of science.

With reference to the bearing of Church authority on the present discussion, there are three points which I should wish to urge. First, that the undivided Church never took action

¹ Thus Riehm, whose position is described above on p. xx, has a noble section (*Einleit.* pp. 349 ff.) on the Pentateuch considered as the record of a Revelation. The conviction of the revelation of God is ascribed in part to 'the immediate impression which

the Pentateuch makes. Anyone who reads it, so as to allow its contents to work upon his spirit, must receive the impression that a consciousness of God, such as is here expressed, cannot be derived from flesh and blood.'

on the matter, in spite of an extravagant tendency to allegorism in Origen and those who were influenced by him.

Secondly, that as a result of this the patristic theology leaves a wide opening at least for what we may call the modern way of regarding the opening chapters of Genesis. Thus a Latin writer, of the fifth or sixth century, who gives an interesting summary of the Catholic faith, and is clearly nothing else but a recorder of accepted beliefs, after speaking of the origin and fall of man and woman, continues thus: 'These things are known through God's revelation to His servant Moses, whom He willed to be aware of the state and origin of man, as the books which he produced testify. For all the divine authority (i. e. the scriptural revelation) appears to exist under such a mode as is either the mode of history which narrates only what happened, or the mode of allegory in such sense that it cannot represent the course of history, or a mode made up of these two so as to remain both historical and allegorical¹.' A great deal more in the same sense as this might be produced.

Thirdly, it must be urged that since the division of Christendom no part of the Church appears really to have tightened the bond of dogmatic obligation. Our own formularies are of course markedly free from definition on the subject, and the refusal of the Roman Church to define the scope of inspiration, beyond the region of faith and morals, has been remarkable².

6. But does the authority of our Lord bind us to repudiate, in loyalty to Him, the modern views of the origin of the Old Testament books? On this subject I wish to express my

¹ *De fide Catholica*. The treatise is ascribed to Boethius: see Boetii, *Opuscula Sacra* (Teubner Series), p. 178. On the fresh evidence of the authorship of those treatises supplied by the *Anecdoton Holderi*, see Hodgkin's *Letters*

of Cassiodorus, London, 1886, pp. 80-1.

² See the account in Manning's *Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost*, London, 1877, pp. 156-160, and p. 166. Cf. also Newman's words below, p. 350.

sincere regret that I should have written so briefly in my essay as to lay myself open to be misunderstood to suggest our Lord's fallibility as a teacher. I trust that the passage, as it has stood since the fourth edition¹, will be at least recognised as plain in its meaning and theologically innocent. I must ask leave to defer to another occasion the fuller discussion of this important subject in connection with the doctrine of the Person of Christ. Meanwhile I would suggest that the longer one thinks of it the more apparent it will become that *any hypothesis as to the origin of any one book of the Old Testament, which is consistent with a belief in its inspiration, must be consistent also with our Lord having given it His authorisation.* If His Spirit could inspire it, He, in that Spirit, could give it His recognition—His recognition, that is to say, in regard to its spiritual function and character. Thus as we scan carefully our Lord's use of the Old Testament books, we are surely struck with the fact that nothing² in His use of them depends on questions of authorship or date; He appeals to them in that spiritual aspect which abides through all changes of literary theory—their testimony to the Christ: 'Search the Scriptures . . . they are they which testify of Me.' He would thus lead men to ask about each book of the Old Testament simply the question,—What is the element of teaching preparatory to the Incarnation, what is the testimony to Christ, which it supplies? I do not see how with due regard to the self-limitation which all use of human forms of thought and speech must on all showing have involved to

¹ pp. 359–60.

² Nothing—except, on the customary interpretation, His reference to Psalm cx. This does seem to lay stress on David's authorship, unless it be regarded, as it certainly seems to me fair to regard it, as a question, rather than as positive instruction at all—a question simply calculated to

lead the Pharisees to examine their own principles. Unless it be so interpreted it does seem to depend, as an argument, on personal authorship, because unless it be by David, it seems very difficult to suppose it written in David's person. It would naturally be a Psalm in which *the King is addressed.*

the Eternal Son, it can be a difficulty in the way of accepting the modern hypothesis, that our Lord referred to the inspired books under the only name by which His reference would have been intelligible to His hearers. Unless He had violated the whole principle of the Incarnation, by anticipating the slow development of natural knowledge, He must have spoken of the Deuteronomist as 'Moses¹,' as naturally as He spoke of the sun 'rising.' Nor does there seem in fact any greater difficulty in His speaking of one who wrote 'in the spirit and power' of Moses as Moses, than in His speaking of one who, according to the prophecy, came 'in the spirit and power of Elias' as himself, Elias. 'If ye will receive it, this is Elias.' 'Elias is already come².'

Once more: if the Holy Spirit could use the tradition of the flood to teach men about divine judgments, then our Lord in the same Spirit can refer to the flood, for the same purpose. It has however been recently denied that this can be so, unless the tradition accurately represents history. 'I venture to ask,' Professor Huxley writes³, 'what sort of value as an illustration of God's method of dealing with sin has an account of an event that never happened?' I should like to meet this question by asking another. Has the story of the rich man and Lazarus any value as an illustration of God's method of dealing with men? Undoubtedly it has. Now what sort of narrative is this? Not a narrative of events that actually happened, in the sense that there was a particular beggar to whom our Lord was referring. The narrative is a *representative* narrative⁴, a narrative of what is

¹ S. John v. 46-47.

² S. Luke i. 17; S. Matt. xi. 14; xvii. 12.

³ *Nineteenth Century*, July, 1890, p. 20. The bulk of his argument is directed against a position different from mine. Here I am only concerned

with a single point.

⁴ The proper name 'Lazarus' is presumably used because of its meaning. It should be noticed that the story is not a *parable* proper like that of the Sower or the Prodigal Son.

constantly occurring under the form of a particular typical incident. Now the narrative of the flood belongs to a quite different class of literature, inasmuch as it is not due to any *deliberate* action of imagination; but it resembles our Lord's story *at least* in being representative. It is no doubt based on fact. The traditions of the flood in all races must run back to a real occurrence. But the actual occurrence cannot be exactly estimated. What we have in Genesis is a tradition used as a vehicle for spiritual teaching. As the story is told it becomes, like that of Dives and Lazarus, a typical narrative of what is again and again happening. Again and again, as in the destruction of Jerusalem, or in the French Revolution, God's judgments come on men for their sin: again and again teachers of righteousness are sent to warn of coming judgment and are ridiculed by a world which goes on buying and selling, marrying and giving in marriage, till the flood of God's judgment breaks out and overwhelms them. Again and again, through these great judgments there emerges a remnant, a faithful stock, to be the fountain head of a new and fresh development. The narrative of the flood is a representative narrative, and our Lord, who used the story of Dives and Lazarus, can use this too¹.

VI.

Professor Huxley's article alluded to just now is a somewhat melancholy example of a mode of reasoning which one had hoped had vanished from 'educated circles' for ever—that namely which regards Christianity as a 'religion of a book'

¹ It may be remarked that to regard 'the flood' as a representative or typical expression of a whole class of divine judgments, helps us in interpreting S. Peter's use of it in 1 Peter iii. 19-20. There is no reason for an exceptional treatment of those who perished in one particular flood, but

there is every reason why 'the Gospel should have been preached to those who died' under God's physical judgments of old times, supposing these, as we must suppose them, not to represent God's final moral judgment on individuals: see 1 Peter iv. 6.

in such sense that it is supposed to propose for men's acceptance a volume to be received in all its parts as on the same level, and in the same sense, Divine. On the contrary, Christianity is a religion of a Person. It propounds for our acceptance Jesus Christ, as the revealer of the Father. The test question of the Church to her catechumens has never been: 'Dost thou believe the Bible?' but 'Dost thou believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?' If we do believe that, then we shall further believe in the Bible: in the Old Testament as recording how God prepared the way for Christ: in the New Testament as recording how Christ lived and taught, and containing the witness borne to Him by His earthly friends and ministers. The Bible thus 'ought to be viewed as not a revelation itself, but a record of the proclaiming and receiving of a revelation, by a body which is still existent, and which propounds the revelation to us, namely the body of Christians commonly called the Church¹.' The Bible is the record of the proclamation of the revelation, not the revelation itself. The revelation is in the Person of Christ, and the whole stress therefore of *evidential* enquiry should be laid upon the central question whether the Divine claim made for Jesus Christ by the Church is historically justified. The whole evidential battle of Christianity must thus be fought out on the field of the New Testament, not of the Old. If Christ be God, the Son of God, incarnate, as the Creeds assert, Christianity is true. No one in that case will find any permanent difficulty in seeing that in a most real sense the Bible, containing both Old and New Testaments, is an 'inspired volume.'

Now faith in the Godhead of our Lord is very far from being

¹ These words are Bishop Steere's: see the *Memoir* of him by R. M. Heanley, London, 1888, p. 404. He admirably characterizes the true function of the Bible in the Church.

It is (1) a criterion, not a teacher; (2) a record of the proclamation of the revelation, not the revelation itself.

a mere matter of 'evidences.' On this enough is said by more than one writer in this volume¹. But so far as 'historical evidences' go, we have them in our generation in quite fresh force and power. For our New Testament documents have passed through a critical sifting and analysis of the most trenchant and thorough sort in the fifty years that lie behind us. From such sifting we are learning much about the process through which they took their present shape. But in all that is material we feel that this critical investigation has only reassured us in asserting the historical truth of the records on which our Christian faith rests. This reassurance has been both as to the substance, and as to the quality of the original apostolic testimony to Christ. As to its substance, because the critical investigation justifies us in the confident assertion—more confident as the investigation has been more thorough than ever before—that the Christ of our four Gospels, the Christ with His Divine claim and miraculous life-giving power, the Christ raised from the dead the third day and glorified at God's right hand, the Christ who is the Son of God incarnate, is the original Jesus of Nazareth, as they beheld Him and bore witness who had been educated in closest intercourse with Him. We are reassured also as to the quality of the apostolic testimony. In some ages testimony has been careless—so careless, so clouded with superstition and credulity, as to be practically valueless. But in the apostles we have men who knew thoroughly the value of testimony and what depended upon it, who bore witness to what they had seen, and in all cases, save in the exceptional case of S. Paul, to what they had seen over a prolonged period of years; whose conviction about Christ had been gradually formed in spite of much 'slowness of heart,' and even persistent 'unbelief'; formed also in the face of Sadducean scepticism and in the consciousness of what would be said against them;

¹ See pp. 29 ff., 229 ff., 337 ff.

formed into such irresistible strength and unanimity by the solid impress of facts that nothing could shake it, either in the individual or in the body. Such testimony does all for us that testimony can do in such a case. It supports externally and justifies a traditional faith, which is commended to us at the same time internally by its self-evidencing power. And with that faith as the strength of our life we can await with confidence the issue of minor controversies.

It may be hoped that the discussion which this book has raised may do good in two ways.

It may enable people to put the Bible into its right place in the fabric of their Christian belief. It may help to make it plain that in the full sense the Christian's faith is faith only in a Person, and that Person Jesus Christ: that to justify this faith he needs from the Scriptures only the witness of some New Testament documents, considered as containing history: while his belief in the Bible as inspired is, speaking logically, subsequent to his belief in Christ, and even, when we include the New Testament, subsequent to his belief in the Church, as the Body of Christ, rather than prior to it¹.

There is also another good result to which we may hope to see the present controversy minister—the drawing of a clear line in regard to development between the Old Testament and the New. For all modern criticism goes to emphasize the gradualness of the process through which, under the Old Covenant, God prepared the way for Christ. Now all that can be brought to light in this sense, the Church can await with indifference from a theological point of view, because it is of the essence of the Old Testament to be

¹ Cp. pp. 338–341, where this is explained. The 'logical' order of belief is often no doubt not the order of experience. The Bible can draw men to itself, and through itself to

Christ, before they take any heed of the Church. But to feel the power of inspiration is a different thing from having reasoned grounds for calling certain books inspired.

the record of a gradual self-disclosure of God continuous and progressive till the incarnation of Jesus Christ. It is, on the other hand, of the essence of the New Testament revelation that, as given in Christ and proclaimed by His apostles, it is, as far as this world is concerned, in its substance, final and adequate for all ages. It is this, because of its essential nature. If Christ is 'the Word made flesh,' the 'Son of God made Son of Man,' then finality essentially belongs to this disclosure of Godhead and this exhibition of manhood. 'He that hath seen Him hath seen the Father,' and he that hath seen Him hath seen perfect man, hath seen our manhood in its closest conceivable relation to God, at the goal of all possible spiritual and moral development. All our growth henceforth can only be a growth into 'the measure of the stature of His fulness'—a growth into the understanding and possession of Him who was once manifested. Finality is of the essence of the New Covenant, as gradual communication of truth was of the Old.

If these two results are obtained, we shall not be liable any more to be asked 'where we are going to stop' in admitting historical uncertainty. 'If you admit so much uncertainty in the Old Testament, why do you not admit the same in the New?' We shall not be liable to be asked this question, because it will be apparent that the starting-point as of enquiry, so of security, lies in the New Testament and then proceeds to extend itself to the Old. For us, at least, the Old Testament depends upon the New, not the New upon the Old.

Nor shall we be liable any more to be asked, 'Why, if you admit so much development in actual substance in the truth revealed under the Old Covenant, cannot you admit a similar augmentation under the New?' This question will be prevented, because it will be apparent that the essential conditions are different in the two cases. Progress in Christianity is always reversion to an original and perfect type, not

addition to it: it is progress only in the understanding of the Christ. 'Regnum tuum, Domine, regnum omnium saeculorum; et dominatio tua in omni generatione et generationem.'

C. G.

PUSEY HOUSE,
July, 1890.

The chief changes of any importance in this edition are (1) the addition of a note at the end of the first essay; (2) the alteration of a few sentences on pp. 289, 296-7 of Essay VII; (3) the alteration of note 2 on p. 345 and note 1 on p. 346 in Essay VIII; (4) the expansion on p. 357, § 6 of the opening sentences; (5) the addition of an appendix on *The Christian Doctrine of Sin*.

APPENDIX II.

ON THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF SIN.

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‘Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for He knew what was in man.’—*S. John* ii. 24, 25.

‘Sin is lawlessness.’—*I S. John* iii. 4. [R.V.]

‘He knew what was in man.’ The words describe our Lord in presence of a fact universally recognized—man’s moral unsatisfactoriness. He looks steadily at man’s first offer of service, at man’s first enthusiasm, when ‘many believed in His name,’ and He discerns behind it a disqualifying cause; something which prevents Him from trusting man as he is, and from committing to him the great work of His kingdom. He sees sin in man and all that sin involves of moral failure, of refusal to endure, of spiritual blindness, of lawless self-assertion, of passion, of selfishness, of self-will. That there is in human nature this disqualifying taint of sin is, we may say, a fact universally recognized. It is the fact which in slow embittering experience has turned philanthropists into cynics and saddened the wisest. But to our Lord it was a fact present from the first. ‘He needed not that any should testify of man.’ He reckoned with sin to start with. Therefore He could not use mankind, as it offered itself, for His purposes. It needed a fresh start, a vital re-creation, to fit it for such high ends. ‘Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.’ ‘Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.’

Christ recognizes the fact of sin. All men more or less come

¹ A sermon preached before the University of Cambridge, at Great St. Mary’s Church, on Sunday, March 17, 1889, by the Rev. Charles Gore, and printed in the *Guardian*, March 27. A paragraph of practical exhortation is omitted at the end. Some apology is no doubt needed for the

introduction of a Sermon into a volume of Essays. But it was felt (1) that there was under the circumstances an advantage in producing what was not written in view of the criticisms on *Lux Mundi*; (2) that the sermon was not specially homiletic.

to recognize it within them and without. But yet there have been very different ways of explaining it.

For upon the surface it is tempting to interpret the struggle between good and evil, as we know it so sadly well in our narrow experience, as representing a universal conflict between opposite principles. The world is a composite thing, men have supposed, the result of the antagonism of two Principles, two kingdoms, two Gods, one good and the other evil; or they have explained the world as representing the action of a good God upon an intractable material, eternal as Himself, which limits His power and restrains His hand. On either of these cognate theories¹ the soul of man is naturally represented as a creation of the good Principle or a particle of it, embedded in a vile body of material evil which clogs and hinders and impedes it, which is the seat of lusts and passions, defiling the purity of the spiritual element. The spirit is good and the body is evil. This is the theory upon which so much of Oriental asceticism has proceeded. The object of such asceticism is to liberate the pure spirit from the trammels of the corrupting and imprisoning body. That is most spiritual which is least material. Purification is abstraction from the body. The spirit is akin to God, and will one day win its way up to be re-absorbed in God. The body is material and evil, the seat of sin, and to be dealt with as such. Hence the remorseless persecution of the body which has been exhibited by the devotees of Gnosticism or Brahmanism—the denunciation of marriage, of animal flesh and wine. Hence, on the other hand, the wild rebound into licentiousness which has sometimes characterized Gnostic or Manichæan sects. For, after all, when asceticism has done its utmost we are still in the body. If connection with the body is sin, eating and drinking at all is as sinful as excess; marriage the same as licence. Outward acts become indifferent—indifferently bad. This principle explains the reaction from extreme mortification to extreme licence which characterizes Orientalism.

Once more, in modern times, from a different point of view, materialism has again interpreted sin as an essential part of nature. Ignoring the distinction of what is moral and what is

¹ The first is that of the Manichæans and some Gnostics. The second that of the Platonists and other Gnostics. But both the theories represent tendencies very commonly at work both

among Orientals and in Europe. Recently John Stuart Mill was disposed to embrace the latter theory: see *Three Essays on Religion*, 3rd edition, London, 1874, pp. 58, 243.

physical, the materialistic Positivism, for instance, of Mr. Cotter Morison represents goodness and badness in men as the simple product of natural forces like goodness and badness in fruits of the earth, each class of good and bad men being essentially and inevitably what it shows itself to be. 'Nothing is gained,' he says, 'by disguising the fact that there is no remedy for a bad heart and no substitute for a good one¹.'

It is common to all the anti-Christian views of sin that at the last resort they make sin natural, a part of nature. It is characteristic of Christ's view of sin—of the Scriptural view of it—that it makes it unnatural. It is characteristic, again, of the non-Christian view that it makes the body, the material, the seat of sin. It is essential to the Christian view to find its seat and only source in the *will*².

Take the vilest crime, and Christianity assures you that throughout the transaction, as you may observe it, there is nothing evil in the natural material which is employed, there is only the lawless misuse of material which is in itself good. The worst passions are but the disorderly exercise of feelings and faculties in themselves good and capable of redemption. Lust is only love uncontrolled by the will, and, therefore, lawless. Take the lowest criminal, and Christianity assures you that, however habituated all his nature to run to evil, if you can once get his will—what Scripture calls his 'heart'—set right and given to God, that right direction of the will, the heart, will after long battle at last carry with it all the nature; the forces of grace are set free to act when the obstacle of the will's rebellion or apathy is removed, and (though it takes ages beyond this mortal life) at last the whole being will be purified, and what began in the surrender of the will will take effect in the illumination of the intellect and the purifying of the affections. Thus it is that Christianity can represent God as justifying the sinner in virtue of faith. Faith is the first movement of the will and heart by which the sinner, from the far-off country of his exile, seeks his true home, from the depth of his sin, claims Christ as his own. At this first movement God welcomes him. He meets him with His acceptance. He claims him as His true

¹ *The Service of Man*, London, 1887, p. 295. Cf. p. 293, 'It will perhaps be said that this view does away with moral responsibility . . . To which the answer is, that the sooner the

idea of moral responsibility is got rid of, the better it will be for society and moral education.'

² See, for instance, Tertullian, *de paenit.* 3; Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*, i. 11.

son, because in that first movement of the moral being God sees the pledge of all that is to come. He sees the forces let loose which will bring the final victory. He deals with the sinner by a Divine anticipation, not as he is, but as he is on the way to become¹. 'His faith is reckoned for righteousness.'

Let us dwell on the Christian view of sin, in its essence, in its appeal, in its practical justification, in its anthropological results.

(1) In its essence. It is expressed by S. John, 'Sin is lawlessness :' ἡ ἀμαρτία ἐστὶν ἡ ἀνομία. The two terms are coincident. For God, and God only, made the world, and there is no other Creator, no other creation. He made it, and pronounced it very good in its completeness. The universe, in all its sum of forces and existences, is good, and of God. The very existence of anything is a pledge of its natural goodness. It exists only because God created it and sustains it and dwells in it. It must cease to exist, S. Augustine tells us, if it were simply evil². Positive existence is always, so far, good.

What then is sin in men or in devils? In one word, *lawlessness*—the violation of nature, the misuse of good by rebellion of the will. Physical decay, death, dissolution, change, these are of nature; sin, on the other hand, is contrary to nature. It is simply misuse, disorder. It has no positive substance. A sinful man is not the man as God made him with something else introduced called sin. He is simply the man as God made him, disordered by ignoring God, by claiming independence of God, by lawlessness. The same act may constitute either the sin of murder or the heroism of a soldier fighting in his country's defence; either the sin of adultery or Christian marriage, because in the one case the act is done in accordance with the God-given law of our being; in the other case in defiance of it. The humanity of Christ and the humanity of the greatest criminal are consubstantial the one with the other. All that the criminal sins with belongs to Christ's nature; He has all the faculties that are used for sin. 'He could sin if He could *will* to sin,' the Fathers tell us, 'but God forbid that we should think of His willing it³.' What is disordered, ungoverned in the criminal is in Christ perfectly subordinated to a will, itself controlled in

¹ Augustine, *de Trin.* i. 10. 21.

² Aug. *de mor. Man.* ii. 3, 'Ut ab essentia deficiant et ad non esse tendant? quod malum generale esse clamat verissima ratio.' *Op. imp. c. Jul.* i. 114, 'Non enim potest esse ulla

malum nisi in aliquo bono; quia non potest esse nisi in aliqua natura; omnis autem natura, in quantum natura est, bonum est.'

³ For references, see p. 290, note.

loving harmony by the Divine Spirit. If it sounds preposterous to say that the *nature* of the criminal is not of itself sinful, to make the statement reasonable and true we have only to bear in mind the results of sin which have taken slow effect upon his nature in the sequence of generations of bad habit. The body may have become so accustomed to sin, so moulded to sin by forces within and without as to justify S. Paul calling it a 'body of sin¹,' but only in the sense in which our Lord calls money or mammon 'the mammon of unrighteousness².' Money, our Lord meant, has become so accustomed, so to speak, to lend itself to the purposes of unrighteousness that it requires attention as alert, wisdom as far-sighted, as that of the unjust steward, in the children of light, to divert it again to its true uses. The body in the same way has been so moulded to sin, accustomed to sin, that it requires the strong hand of an asceticism, rightly motivated, to 'keep it under,' to lead it as a slave, to wrest it to good uses. It requires the cutting off of the right hand or the plucking out of the right eye—the disuse for a time, that is, by doing violence to oneself of what has become so misused, so lawless. The bow must be bent violently back, if it is to be made straight. But the end of all this Christian asceticism is the restoration of our whole nature to its true law. We mortify our bodies only to offer them at last a living sacrifice of rational service. At last all the impulses and passions and parts of even the criminal nature shall be subjugated again to the law of the Spirit. Christ shall purify the impure and harmonise the disorderly. Thus down the vista of an endless future Christianity forces us to see the nature of the criminal, if he will but turn Godwards, only reconstituted, not substantially changed, one with Christ in glory. This is the Christian doctrine of sin, the doctrine that Athanasius and Augustine and Anselm, the Christian Fathers as a whole, repeat and reiterate; that sin has no substance; that there is no positively sinful nature; that sin lies not in things, but in our relation to things; that the introduction of sin is simply the privation of order; that moral recovery waits for nothing but the conversion of will³.

¹ Rom. v. 6: see Godet's *Commentary* in loc. Clark's *Foreign Theol. Libr.* i. p. 416; and cf. Col. ii. 11, τὸ σῶμα τῆς σαρκός.

² S. Luke xvi. 9.

³ See Origen, *C. Cels.* iv. 65-66; Athan. *C. Gentes*, 6-7; and cf. the

index to S. Augustine *s. v.* malum. So far, however, as each individual identifies himself with sin, it becomes 'his nature': a false nature, obscuring the true, but never annihilating it; cf. Tertullian, *de An.* 41, 'Naturæ corruptio alia natura est,' etc.; and

(2) This is the Christian doctrine, and its appeal is to moral experience. Looking at the world from the point of view of physical science, it may appear as if goodness and badness were like good and bad fruit; but to suppose this is to leave out of sight the whole witness of *moral* experience. It was not Christian belief but inextinguishable consciousness that made Byron cry—

‘Our life is a false nature—’tis not in
The harmony of things.’

Or Shelley:—

‘The universe
In Nature’s silent eloquence declares
That all fulfil the works of love and joy,
All but the outcast man¹.’

In proportion as the moral consciousness is keen and active, in that proportion men know that sin is not nature, but its violation; that they are not what they are meant to be in sinning; that sin has no analogy in the failures of nature, because it is what they are not, avoidable and morally wrong; that it violates what they fulfil, the law of the world. Natural failure is part of the world’s fruitfulness. The seeds that fail supply material for the seeds that grow. Moral failure—sin, that is, as distinguished from mere imperfection—is never fruitful. Sins are always the ‘unfruitful works of darkness².’

(3) And the justification of this Christian theory lies in its *success*. The moral triumphs of the Church depend upon it. Mr. Herbert Spencer constantly assures us that the fundamental postulates of human experience are assumptions or hypotheses at the bottom, which are continuously verified and justified by the correspondence of the results reached. That is true of the Christian postulate of sin. The hypothesis that sin is not nature, but lack of will, is verified by the victory which follows action upon it. ‘According to thy faith be it done to thee’—that is Christ’s challenge. Man after man sick of moral paralysis lies at Christ’s feet explaining why he cannot get up. ‘Take up thy bed and walk,’ ‘According to thy faith be it unto thee,’ is the word of Christ. Claim for your own the morally best. Act on Christ’s promise as if it were true and you find it is. This is faith—to act on what transcends experience, to act on

Bernard, in *Cant. Serm.* 82. 2,—admirable passages.

¹ See in Mozley, *Lectures*, etc., x. p.

159.

² Cf. in explanation of this, the Preface, p. xviii.

what you do not feel possible, to act in faith on a promised strength, and to find it really given only in the using. Faith involves the recognition of our own weakness, the surrender of our own independence into the hands of God; it gains as its reward the promised help; it sets free the 'virtue which goes out' of Christ. Reason can only analyse and rationalise what it already experiences. Faith can do what reason, what understanding, at any rate, cannot do—it can yield life up to higher forces than it has yet known. Only when the forces have become in experience thoroughly familiar can they be subjected to the analysis of reason. *Credo ut intelligam.* The justification of the Christian view of sin as something which is not nature, but failure or disorder of will—something therefore which faith, that is the right direction and use of will, can overcome, or put in the way to be overcome—the justification of this view is, I say, to be found in experience. Act against sin, in Christ's name, as if you had strength, and you will find you have. Expect and you receive. It finds its justification not in the recovery of our own lives only, but in that of others. The Christian lifts others by believing in them. He sees in each the subject of redemption. Behind heaps of sin, ingrained habits of sin, he sees a man's true self, true nature, as God made it and intended it to grow, and to this he appeals. 'According to thy faith be it unto thee' means not only 'You can be saved, if you believe;' it means also 'You can save others'—save them by believing in them and in God, save them, not according to your own foolish desires, but in accordance with God's intention for them, with the original law of their being. The best modern novel literature is full of this truth. What are the moral recoveries of Jean Valjean in *Les Misérables*, and of Sidney Carton in the *Tale of Two Cities*, and of the selfish old peer in the child story of the *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, but so many instances of the redemptive power of Christian love because it 'believeth all things, hopeth all things,' believes past belief, hopes beyond hope. The justification of the Christian view of sin lies, then, in its success; partly in the results it actually produces, partly in the larger promise which it opens out beyond the horizon of what we see. 'There is no remedy for a bad character and no substitute for a good one'—that is the only outcome of the physical view of sin. 'According to thy faith, be it unto thee'—that is the Christian answer; there is for thyself no limit to what thou mayest become, on the lines, that is to say,

not of thine own ambition, but of God's purpose, except what thou settest by thine own want of faith, thine own failure of moral appetite; there is in the case of others no limit to what thou mayest help them to become, on the lines, once again, of their fundamental nature—except the limits of their faith and thine.

(4) This Christian view of sin determines in part its whole anthropology. What sin is in us, and now, and in recorded history, sin is also in the whole of humanity. Sin actual is of a piece with sin historical, with sin original. Each man does not start afresh. He inherits the moral conditions from which his life starts. I am aware that a modern school of biologists, headed by Professor Weissmann, is modifying the current doctrine of heredity so far as to deny that acquired character can be transmitted, so far as to deny that the acts or habits of men can physically modify the organisation of their descendants. It is not yet clear that this view, in its extreme form, is at all likely to gain acceptance. But I suppose Christianity can await the result with patience. It may not be in any region to which scientific analysis or investigation can penetrate, but at least in the inner region of man's personality Christianity must maintain that the individual does not start afresh. He starts the subject of sinful tendencies which he did not originate, but which those who went before him did, if not originate, at least let loose from restraint, and so make sinful. Sin is in the race as well as in the individual; stayed more or less by moral effort and resistance here; let loose by self-indulgence or luxury there: in varying force and alterable sway therefore, but everywhere more or less present, everywhere making a man conscious not merely of imperfection, but of inward taint, everywhere needing re-creation, recovery, redemption. And everywhere sin is of a piece. My sins are only fresh specimens of what has been going on all along. They work just the same result upon humanity as a whole as the sins of my predecessors, as the first sin: I am driven logically as well as theologically to extend my theory of sin and to generalise it beyond present experience. Sin, not in the individual, as I know him merely, but in the whole of humanity from the first, has been always rebellion, not nature. At the beginning of human life, properly so called, when first a being truly called a man woke up to consciousness of his relation to God, to nature, to himself, he did not find sin part of his being; he might have obeyed the movement of the Spirit of God and realised his true sonship by keeping his

animal nature under the control of the spirit : so he would have fulfilled the law of his destined manhood. Sin at the origin of our human life, as through all its history, was treason to our higher capacity, which made man the slave of the flesh. The 'slave of the flesh,' because he was not meant to be an animal : he was meant to be a spiritual being. And it was the capacity for the higher life which turned to sin his choice of a lower ; which tinged it with the colour of 'remorse,' with the bitterness of 'self-contempt'.

As the essential Christian doctrine of sin finds the guarantee of its permanence in the moral consciousness, so it would not appear to involve any conflict with the disclosures of science. Yet it has been sufficiently distorted in statement for a conflict to have arisen. And the points at issue are briefly three.

(a) Broadly, it is said, the Christian religion represents man as starting in a state of perfection and gradually degrading. Science, with all the evidences on its side, represents man as starting in a state of savagery and gradually rising.

This is a most delusive antithesis. It is certainly true that progress has not been uniform. There is such a thing as moral deterioration. A history of the progress of sin from will to intellect, from intellect to heart, till it penetrates the whole nature and plunges it into the lowest depths of denaturalisation represents what has been a fact both in the individual and in society. Such a record of one element in human experience S. Paul gives us in Romans i². Its truth cannot be denied. But so far is this from representing the Christian view of human history as a whole that, on the contrary, the Scriptures stand alone among ancient literatures in presenting the idea of gradual progress, gradual education, movement onwards to a climax. The Bible is the book of development. 'God Who in many parts and many manners spoke of old time . . .

¹ There is a fundamental mistake in the popular excuse for sensual sin—that it is 'natural.' The mistake lies in the idea that man's animal and spiritual natures are separable, that he can live as pure animal in one part of his life, and pure spirit in another. But as a fact man's life is only lived 'according to nature,' where every part of it is lived 'in flesh and in spirit': the spiritual motive must control the bodily organ. Only so are his acts really human.

If he tries to act as a mere animal he becomes sinful. The evidence of this lies in the fact that while the physical nature of animals contains within itself the check on sensual indulgence, the check in man's case lies in his spiritual faculties. You can have a 'dissipated' man, i. e. a man whose bodily impulses are uncontrolled by will or spirit; you cannot have a 'dissipated' animal.

² It is not intended as a *complete* account, cf. Rom. ii. 14-15.

hath in the end of these days spoken by His Son;’ and still we move on in the realisation and appropriation of all that is revealed and given in Christ ‘till we all come . . . unto the perfect man.’ Nor is it the least true to say that this development is *only* the attempt to regain the platform on which man was first placed. The idea of the first man as a being of developed intellectual and spiritual capacity, perfect in all the range of his faculties—the idea which would admit of our saying with Robert South that ‘an Aristotle was but the rubbish of an Adam, and Athens but the rudiments of Paradise’—may be, indeed has been, found in theologians, it may have passed into the imagination of the English nation as part of the debt, theologically very largely a debt of evil, which we owe to the great poem of Milton; but it is not Scriptural, it is not Christian theology at its best¹. All the fabric of civilisation the Bible represents as being gradually built up, whether by Jabal, ‘who was the father of such as dwell in tents and have cattle,’ or by Jubal, ‘who was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ,’ or by Tubal Cain, ‘who was the instructor of every artificer of brass and iron.’ There is no impression given us that any of the arts or the knowledge of civilisation existed before. All that we are led to believe is that the historical development of man has not been the development simply as God meant it. It has been tainted through its whole fabric by an element of moral disorder, of human wilfulness. We cannot draw a picture of how human nature was intended to fight the battle of progress. We cannot relate the state of the savage to the intention of God, any more than we can relate the present state of our great cities to that intention². All we can say is that the state of things as they were in days of savagery, or as they are in days of civilisation, represents a *parody* of the Divine intention for the childhood and manhood of the race. Man was made to grow by gradual effort in range and exercise of every faculty of his being. But all this gradual growth might have been conditioned by a conscious fellowship with God, which would have introduced into it an element of nobility and stability which in fact it has lacked. For the historical development of

¹ In answer to the question whether Adam was formed perfect or imperfect [τέλειος ἢ ἀτελής], Clement replies: ‘They shall learn from us that he was not perfect [i. e. complete in development, τέλειος] in respect of his creation, but in a fit condition to receive virtue.’ Clem. Alex. *Strom.* vi. 12. 96. Cp.

Iren. c. haer. iv. 38.

² But we can recognize that before civilisation had developed the checks which society supplies against abrupt deterioration, collapse into savagery would have been much more rapid than it can be in a more developed state.

man has been a development with God only too often left out, the development under conditions of merely physical laws of a being meant to be spiritual¹.

(b) 'But no,' the biologist rejoins; 'you will not get off thus easily. Christianity regards even so absolutely natural a fact as death, a fact so inextricably interwoven into the structural growth of the world, as a mere consequence of sin. Christianity is refuted by every evidence of death being a law of physical nature.' So far from this being true, it is the case that the early Christian writers, S. Augustine as well as S. Athanasius, emphasise the truth that death is the law of physical nature; that when man died he was undergoing what belonged to his animal nature. 'Paul,' says Augustine, 'describes man's body as dead, not as mortal, because of sin. Mortal it was by nature, because, as being animal, it was subject to death².' In being left to death, Athanasius teaches, man was only left to the law of his physical being³. What, in fact, the Christian teachers hold is not that death, but death as it has been known among men, is the penalty of sin, because man's spiritual or supernatural life would have blunted the forces of corruption and lifted him into a higher immortal state. Man would not have died because he would have been spiritual rather than animal. And even here, if we are asked what this means, we must hesitate in our answer. If sin is said to have brought human death, Christ is said to have abolished it. 'This is the bread which cometh down from heaven that a man may eat thereof and not die.' 'If any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever.' 'Whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die.' 'Christ Jesus . . . abolished death.' Sin, we may suppose, only introduced death in the sense in which Christ abolished it⁴. Christ has not abolished the physical transition, but it ceases to be what death implies:—

¹ Cf. Aubrey Moore's *Evolution and Christianity* (Oxford House Papers), pp. 32-3. 'The change which took place at the Fall was a change in the moral region; but it could not be without its effect elsewhere. Even the knowledge of nature becomes confused, without the governing truth of the relation of man to God. The evolution which should have been the harmonious development of the whole man, is checked and impeded in one part, and that the highest part of his nature. And therefore, in spite of all the physical and intellec-

tual advance which man has made, he is always and everywhere the worse for the Fall. However great his development has been, it is still a retarded development, a development slower than it need have been, less regular and less sure than God meant it to be.'

² Aug. *De gen. ad litt.* vi. 36, 'Mortalis erat conditione corporis animalis.'

³ Athan. *de Incarn.* 4.

⁴ Cf. Westcott's *Ep. to the Hebrews*, p. 54 (on Hebr. ii. 16).

‘Henceforth is death
But the gate of life immortal.’

Death as it has come upon sinful man has been the sad ending of hopes, the rending of his heart-strings, the collapse of his plans, the overshadowing fear, the horrible gulf, the black destruction. In all that makes it death, it has been the result of sin, of the misdirection of his aims and hopes. Had man not sinned there might, indeed, have been a passage from one state to another, a physical dissolution, a moral victory—but it would not have been what men have known as ‘death.’

If this be the right way of regarding the matter, as it is certainly permissible, we shall be able to echo in all its breadth Athanasius’s teaching, that sin did not directly alter *things*, but only our attitude towards them¹.

(c) But, once again, and for the last time, the opponent objects: ‘All this theory of original sin is built simply on the supposition that the early chapters of Genesis represent literal history. It falls to the ground if they are myth and not history.’ Once again, this is not at all the case. The Christian doctrine of sin finds its chief authorisation in Christ’s attitude towards it. Sin (if Christ’s witness is true) is not nature; it does not represent God’s intention, but something that has baffled for a time God’s intention, something that Christ is come to conquer. Moreover, this doctrine of sin is not a mere dogma enunciated on external authority; it finds its verification in experience. The moral experience of Christendom confirms it, and this experience of eighteen centuries reflects itself inevitably on the whole of human life. What interprets sin within this area interprets it through the whole history. With this authority of Christ, verified in the Christian experience, as his firm foundation, the Christian does not hesitate to see in the early chapters of Genesis the action of the inspiring Spirit. It was only the inspiring Spirit Which could assure man that the whole universe was of God’s making and very good, that the state in which he found himself represented not his nature, as God meant it to be, but the result of his rebellion, the result, moreover, which God meant to counter-work, nay, which in gradual process He was counter-working. In all the account then of the creation, of the nature of man,

¹ Athan. *C. Gentes* 7; cf. Aug. on Gen. iii. 18 (*De Gen. ad litt.* iii. 18, 28), where it is said that it is difficult to suppose that ‘thorns and thistles’ were first produced on the occasion

of sin; but we may understand that they then first began to be obstacles to man in the cultivation of the ground: ‘*spinus et tribulos pariet tibi.*’

of the origin of sin, the Christian sees an action of the inspiring Spirit. He sees it all the more when he compares the record of Genesis with those which are parallel to it in other races. But if an Irenæus, a Clement, an Athanasius, an Anselm could treat the record or part of it as rather allegorical than historical, we can use the same liberty. This is not our present subject. All I want to make clear is that the Christian doctrine of sin rests on a far broader and far surer foundation than the belief that the early chapters of Genesis belong to one form or stage of inspired literature rather than to another. It rests on the strong foundation of the authority of our Lord, accepted and verified by man's moral consciousness.



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